METRO / A17

Mark Jimenez's children appeal to their dad: Release ma

SPORTS / A24

Big 2nd quarter helps Spurs go up, 2-0 vs Jazz

WORLD / A20

Bush wins battle with Democrats over $1-B to fund Iraq war

ENTERTAINMENT / D3

Mon David leads stars at 4th Makati jazz fest in Rockwell on Friday

ENTERTAINMENT / D1

Zsazsa: I can never find another man like Dolphy

Waistline tied to urinary symptoms in older men

LAGOT ANG MGA MAY BEER BELLY

NEW YORK—AN EXPANDING waistline in older men is associated with worsening symptoms in the lower urinary tract and poorer sexual function, according to research reported at the American Urological Association

WAISTLINE/ A4

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, May 24, 2007 ★★ 6 sections / Vol. 22 / No. 165 P18 website: www.inquirer.net

Private hospitals protest new law, threaten 'strike'

By Leila B. Salaverria

DOCTORS OF PRIVATE HOSPITALS ARE threatening a nationwide hospital holiday, wherein only emergency cases will be treated, to protest the passage of a measure preventing medical institutions from detaining patients with unpaid bills.

The Private Hospitals Association of the

PRIVATE/ A4

Mindanao fraud detailed

Japanese PM agree to put commitments in writing

By Leah P. Makabenta

TOKYO—JAPANESE PRIME MINISTER Shinzo Abe agreed to put in writing earlier assurances he made during his state visit in January that Japan would not export its toxic wastes to the Philippines under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (Jpepa).

"I remember what I promised during my visit," Abe told President Macapagal-Arroyo at a meeting yesterday.

He was responding to a suggestion from Ms Arroyo that a formal exchange of letters be made at the ministerial level to assure the Filipino public and the Senate which would ratify the treaty that no toxic waste would be dumped on the Philippines.

Abe agreed it would be better to put what he promised in document form. "We will be ready to move in that direction," he said.

The Japanese premier was also pleased with the presence of Sen.

JAPANESE/ A4

AFP

PROMISES: Japanese PM Shinzo Abe warmly welcomes President Arroyo at his official residence in Tokyo on Wednesday. Ms Arroyo is in Japan for a 4-day visit to keynote the 13th Future of Asia Conference. Abe told her he'll keep his promise.

'Lady with guts' sent to Mindanao

By Nikko Dizon and Inquirer Mindanao

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS yesterday placed the violence-wracked province of Shariff Kabunsuan in Mindanao under its control, and announced it was sending "a lady with guts" to the area to count the votes after two other officials refused the job, fearing for their lives.

The poll body appointed Josllyn de Mésa, one of the senior lawyers at the Comelec's law department, as new chair of the Provincial Board of Canvassers (PBOC) to preside over the tabulation of votes.

De Mesa was the third lawyer to head the canvassing board at Shariff Kabunsuan -- a province with a voting population of close to 200,000 -- after the previous PBOC chair backed out "because of security considerations," Election Commissioner Rene Sarmiento said at a press conference.

A second Comelec officer, based in Manila, was subsequently appointed to take over the canvassing but also refused the assignment.

Sarmiento did not give their names.

De Mesa is scheduled to go to Shariff Kabunsuan today to take charge of the canvassing, along with a composite team of Comelec lawyers.

She will be accompanied by Luzon-based regional directors Gregorio Lardizabal and Emmanuel Ignacio.

"No one [would] accept the position as head of the provincial board. [But] we

'LADY/ A8

Elections in Basilan village took place on a pump boat

By Christian V. Esguerra

TEACHERS ASSIGNED TO SUPERVISE the elections in an island-barangay in Basilan had unfamiliar passengers on their pump boat that morning of May 14.

The teachers were bringing ballots and other poll materials collected from Lamitan town to the island, strangely accompanied by several armed men hired by a mayoral candidate in the newly created town of Hadji Mohammad Ajul.

Midway through the boat ride, the

ELECTIONS/ A6

Poll watchers report to Comelec

By Cathy Yamsuan, *in Manila*
Jolene R. Bulambot, *Inquirer Cebu*
Charlie Señase, Nash Maulana and Edwin Fernandez, *Inquirer Mindanao*

POLL WATCHDOGS YESTERDAY gave detailed accounts of massive vote-buying, flagrant cheating and intimidation—including death threats to a foreign observer—in Mindanao during the May 14 elections.

The price of a vote ranged from P1,000 to P7,000 in some areas in Lanao del Sur, according to the watchdogs' accounts.

"Not even the Manila city jail can accommodate all the corrupt people in our area," lawyer Nasser A. Marohomsalic, a member of the executive committee of the legal group Lente, told reporters.

Ranking officers of the Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel), Legal Network for Truthful Elections (Lente) and Citizens' Action for Responsible Elections (C-CARE) took turns detailing how rampant cheating took place in Lanao del Sur.

The officers submitted their report to the Commission on Elections (Comelec).

The Comelec has ordered special elections in at least 13 towns in the province, where voting could not be held because of the presence of armed goons.

Marohomsalic said one supporter of a candidate in Ramain-Ditsaan town even had the audacity to offer

MINDANAO/ A6

ELEKSYON 2007

COMELEC 100% of 154 overseas absentee voters CoCs & 73% of 104 local CoCs As of 5:00 p.m. May 23, 2007			NAMFREL 141,147 out of 224,748 precincts As of 4:46 p.m. May 23, 2007		
1	LEGARDA	13,001,677	1	LEGARDA	10,708,904
2	ESCUDERO	12,885,824	2	ESCUDERO	10,447,254
3	LACSON	10,864,539	3	LACSON	9,181,156
4	VILLAR	10,808,729	4	VILLAR	8,888,061
5	PANGILINAN	10,296,830	5	PANGILINAN	8,517,069
6	AQUINO	10,048,522	6	AQUINO	8,368,486
7	ANGARA	8,652,776	7	ANGARA	7,509,329
8	CAYETANO, A.	8,245,963	8	HONASAN	6,897,847
9	ARROYO	8,192,044	9	ARROYO	6,824,506
10	HONASAN	8,086,144	10	CAYETANO, A.	6,743,200
11	TRILLANES	7,812,006	11	TRILLANES	6,511,771
12	PIMENTEL	7,461,886	12	PIMENTEL	6,438,964
13	ZUBIRI	7,457,809	13	ZUBIRI	6,398,902
14	RECTO	7,414,226	14	RECTO	6,122,519
15	DEFENSOR	6,813,393	15	DEFENSOR	5,896,293
16	PICHAY	6,591,855	16	PICHAY	5,872,461
17	ROCO	5,988,637	17	ROCO	4,899,635
18	MONTANO	5,330,785	18	MONTANO	4,754,779
19	SOTTO	5,177,079	19	OSMENA	4,400,915
20	OSMENA	4,869,319	20	SOTTO	4,190,716

Poll body set to proclaim 9 new senators

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

THE COMMISSION ON ELECTIONS IS GEARING up to proclaim the top nine winners of the senatorial race on Saturday.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos yesterday told reporters the poll body could proceed with the proclamation of the top nine winners if the remaining votes to be canvassed would no longer affect the results.

Special elections in 13 towns in Lanao del Sur are scheduled for Saturday, affecting about 100,000 votes.

The Comelec, acting as the National Board of Canvassers (NBC), has yet to read 28 certificates of canvass (CoCs), more than half of which are from provinces in Mindanao.

It was still 8-2-2 in favor of the Genuine Opposition (GO) as of yesterday afternoon after the Comelec canvassed CoCs from six provinces and one city in Metro Manila.

That brought the total number of canvassed local CoCs to 66 provinces and nine cities in Metro Manila, or almost 73 percent of the 103 local CoCs.

The Comelec has completed the canvassing of all the 154 CoCs for the overseas and local absentee voting.

It was also 8-2-2 in favor of GO in the count of the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections as of 4:46 p.m. yesterday.

POLL BODY/ A6

Inquirer.net drew 1.3 million viewers on Election Day

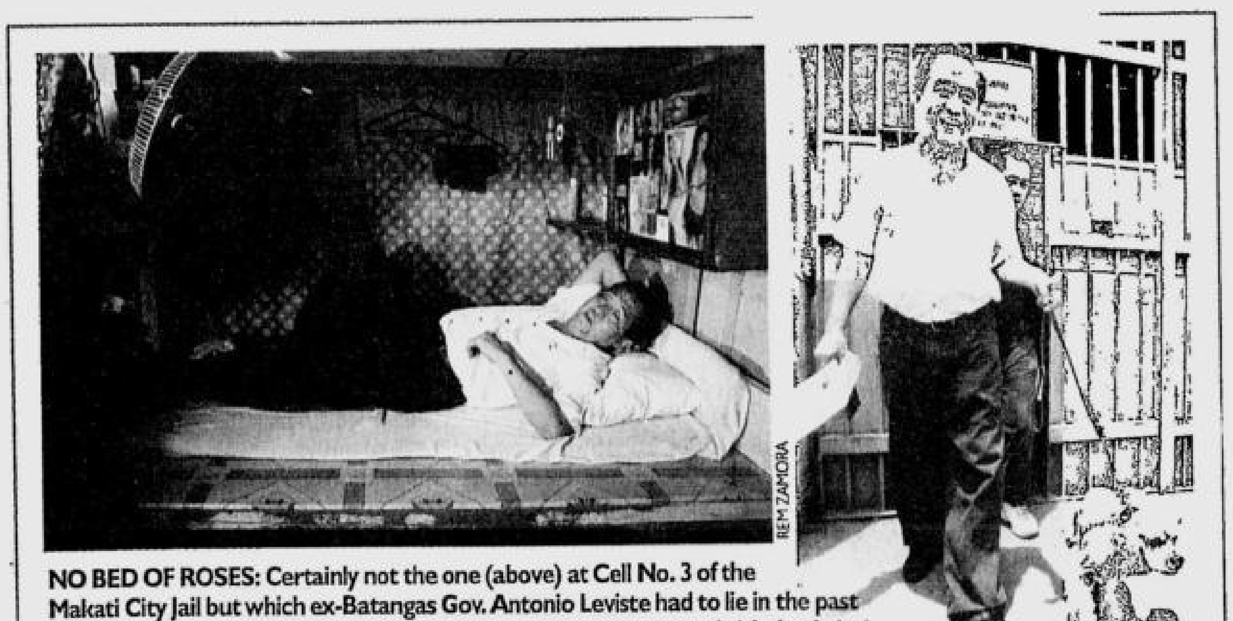
By JV Rufino
Inquirer.net

MOUNTING PEOPLE'S INTEREST IN THE MAY 14 elections continues to drive traffic on inquirer.net, the news website of the Inquirer Group of publications.

On Election Day, at least 1.3 million people visited the site and a total of 9.7 million pageviews were registered, according to the site's traffic analysis system. A pageview refers to a request for a webpage made by a user's browser.

Traffic reached a peak of over 2 million pageviews the day after the elections and had

INQUIRER.NET/ A4


REM ZAMORA

NO BED OF ROSES: Certainly not the one (above) at Cell No. 3 of the Makati City Jail but which ex-Batangas Gov. Antonio Leviste had to lie in the past three months. He stretches out to relax shortly before his release (with dog Leica) on bail for the murder charges filed against him. *(Story on Page A18.)*

6 Pinoy students win in int'l science fair

By TJ Burgonio

FRESH OUT OF HIGH SCHOOL, THEY were clad in casual wear, and were giggling when they faced the press yesterday, belying the depth of their campus researches, which could lead to breakthroughs in science and math someday.

For their novel studies, the six students from science high schools around the Philippines won individual and team awards from a field of more than 1,500 participants from 51 countries at the Intel International Science and Engineering Fair (ISEF).

The Intel ISEF, held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from May 14 to 19, is the world's largest pre-college science competition that brings together young scientists, who want to showcase "cutting-edge science" every year.

"They're the ones who bannered the Philippines during the program," Joselito Tulao, Intel Technology Philippines Inc.'s higher education manager, said while presenting the young awardees to the press at a restaurant in Makati City.

Melvyn Carlo Barroa, 16, won a Fourth Grand Award in the microbiology category for his study that explored the potential of fish mucus as antibiotic.

Hester Mana Umayam, 16, for her part, also bagged a Fourth Grand Award in the behavioral and social sciences for her research that delved into Kalinga na-

6 PINOY/ A9

WINNING HIGH SCHOOLERS at the international science fair in Albuquerque, New Mexico: from left, Ivy Razel Ventura, Mara Elaine Villaverde, Janine Cindy Santiago, Melvyn Carlo Barroa, Hester Mana Umayam.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Luzon, Eastern Visayas and Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

COMPILED BY: LAW DE GUZMAN, INQUIRER RESEARCH/05/23/07 SOURCE: PAGASA

Biazon: It's happening again

By Gil Cabacungan Jr.

THE BATTLEGROUND IS FROM rank nine to 16.

"Watch your back. Don't trust anyone, not even your team mates," warned Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, a veteran of past *dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving) wars.

And while the newly enacted Election Reform Law prescribes life imprisonment for poll cheaters and their beneficiaries, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon believes this has not stopped the cheating.

"The same thing is happening all over again"—same cheating tactics, in the same areas, involving the same usual suspects, said Biazon, who failed a reelection bid in 1995 but was able to salvage the 12th slot in 2004 but only after a bitter struggle with party mate Robert Barbers.

Biazon claimed he was a victim of *dagdag-bawas* in both cases.

"Remember what happened to me. When the administration is pushed to a corner, it is forced to select only one," continued Biazon in an interview with the INQUIRER.

Not surprised

There are currently five TU candidates hovering between the 9th and 16th slots: Joker Arroyo, Ralph Recto, Miguel Zubiri, and Michael Defensor and Prospero Pichay. Oppositionists in the hot zone are Antonio Trillanes and Koko Pimentel. Alan Peter Cayetano and independent Gregorio Honasan seesaw between 8th and 9th place.

Opposition partymates secured in the top eight slots have asked their supporters to continue guarding the votes for the candidates still fighting for the last four slots.

Biazon said he was "not at all surprised" about charges of cheating.

"It's no different from past national exercises. There is vote buying at local levels and at the national level. It's all about certificates of canvass (CoCs) for sale. And these incidents are all happening in traditional areas such as Maguindanao, Lanao del Sur, Basilan, Sultan Kudarat, and Caraga with the same usual suspects in the Comelec (Commission on Elections)," said Biazon.

Biazon said that it was about time that the legislative and executive branches sit together to eradicate cheating in the elections starting in 2010.

Systemic

"I don't think the problem is about the people running the elections; it is systemic. Look at ARMM (Autonomous Region Muslim Mindanao), the Comelec man there is Rene Sarmiento. I believe in his integrity, I know him personally. But still the cheating persists. I think we should try something new, like computerization," said Biazon.

Aside from plugging the loopholes for cheating, Biazon said the recent election showed the need to put a cap on political spending, particularly on television ads.

"When we lifted the political ad ban, we wanted to level the playing field between the popular and lesser known candidates. But at the same time we also created a big divide between the haves and have-nots," said Biazon. *With Norman Bordadora*

FIRE AND RAIN
Former Vice President Teofisto Guingona delivers a fiery speech in the drizzle before a gathering of some 400 protesting cheating in last week's elections outside the Philippine International Convention Center where the Comelec is canvassing votes for senator.
ERIK ARAZAS

Ruffy Biazon wins in Muntinlupa

By Julie M. Aurelio

ENDING NEARLY 10 DAYS OF SUSpense and mudslinging, incumbent Muntinlupa City Rep. Ruffy Biazon was finally proclaimed last night as congressman-elect, defeating challenger Ricardo "Dong" Puno.

Biazon, along with mayoral bet and incumbent vice mayor Aldrin San Pedro were declared the winning candidates by the City Board of Canvassers at exactly 8:30 p.m. last night.

Amid cheers and hoots of teary-eyed supporters and poll watchers, the pair raised their fists in jubilation, capping what seemed to be an endless wait for their victory to become official.

"We are both happy and sad, because not all from our party won in the local elections," San Pedro told reporters at a late afternoon press conference yesterday.

Both San Pedro and Biazon ran under the opposition slate, along with vice mayoral bet Ren-ren Cayetano.

The vice mayor's seat went to Team Fresnedi candidate Temy Simundac.

BIAZON

The People's Center, where the canvassing was held for the last eight days, was jampacked with followers who had to stand on plastic chairs to get a better view of the winners.

Lor Fresnedi, who sought to replace her husband Jaime as mayor, and Puno, were nowhere to be seen at the grounds of the City Hall, where nearly a thousand supporters gathered to await the results of the hotly contested polls.

Biazon's supporters were a bright mix of red and green, while some danced in chicken costumes to the tunes of "Itaktak mo" and "Bulaklak" to show support for San Pedro.

Some Biazon fans also passed around a letter to members of the press, demanding that Puno be banned from all his television shows on ABS-CBN.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon, who spent almost every night watching the canvassing, was visibly ecstatic and proud of his son's reelection, patting the younger Biazon on the back a few minutes before proclamation.

"For the previous days I have told our supporters to go home because there were a lot of people here," the elder Biazon said. "Now I don't want to prevent them anymore."

It was a sweet and overdue victory for the San Pedro-Biazon tandem, who had traded barbs with the Puno camp over allegations of massive electoral fraud.

Earlier, Puno's lawyers chose to pull out from the canvassing, which they claimed as "a sham and illegal proceeding." *With reports from Jenny Lynne G. Aguilar, Hershey D. Homol*

Estrada makes new bid for JV's Tanay wedding

By Volt Contreras

THIS FATHER OF THE GROOM JUST won't give up.

Despite being rejected twice, deposed President Joseph Estrada has again asked the Sandiganbayan to let the wedding of his son, San Juan Mayor-elect Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito, be held at the Tanay, Rizal villa where Estrada is detained on plunder charges.

Estrada's lawyer Rene Saguisag filed a second motion for reconsideration yesterday, invoking "family values" and the convenience of having the June 9 nuptials at the former president's vacation estate rather than having him escorted by the police to another venue.

The wedding of Ejercito and Cindy Lotuaco was originally set last February but was postponed after the antigraft court denied an Estrada pleading to have the rites and reception held in Tanay.

Army welcomes probe of Burgos abduction

By Christine O. Avendaño

THE MILITARY ALSO WANTS A "speedy resolution" of the case of missing activist Joseph Jonas Burgos and is ready to go to court or face any investigation.

Army spokesperson Lt. Col. Ernesto Torres said they were ready to go to court and face militant groups who have accused the military of being behind the disappearance of Burgos.

"We welcome any investigation," Torres told reporters, reacting to the plan of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas that it would file charges of kidnapping and arbitrary detention against top officials of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, whom the group blames for the April 28 disappearance of Burgos.

"If they (KMP members) have sufficient basis for filing a charge against the military, we are open to such an investigation," he said.

Military officials set to be charged are: AFP Chief of Staff Gen. Hermogenes Esperon Jr., Lt. Col. Melquiades Feliciano, Lt. Col. Noel Clemen, Cpl. Castro Bugalon and Pfc. Jose Villena.

Feliciano, commander of the Army's 56th Infantry Battalion based in Norzagaray, Bulacan, had been suspended by Army chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Tolentino pending the completion of an Army investigation of his command's connection to Burgos' disappearance.

The military was also conducting its own probe on how the plate number of an impounded vehicle parked inside the 56th IB ended up as the plate number on the getaway vehicle of Burgos' abductors.

Torres stressed that their investigation was more on the "administrative" aspect since the criminal aspect was being handled by the Philippine National Police.

Mactan Huey training suspended

By Tarra Quismundo and Jhunnex Napallacan, *Inquirer Visayas*

THE PHILIPPINE AIR FORCE (PAF) has suspended all training flights of UH-1H helicopters in its pilot training center at the Mactan Benito Ebuen Air Base in Cebu after a Huey chopper figured in another accident on Tuesday.

PAF chief Lt. Gen. Horacio Tolentino yesterday ordered a reassessment of the Cebu training center's instruction program following the latest mishaps involving Huey choppers on training missions.

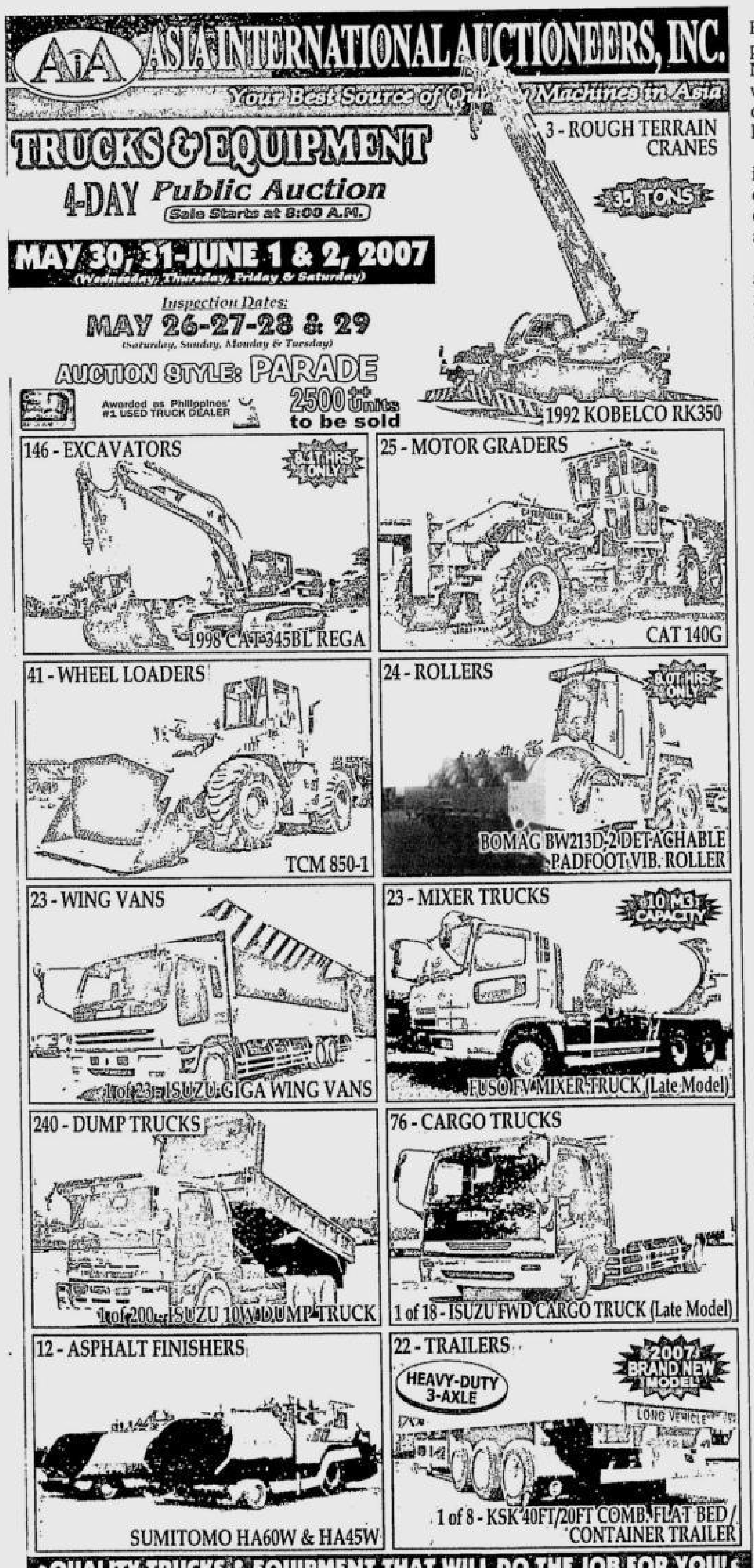
"We have suspended training flights and I have ordered instructors to revisit the program of instruction, their lesson plan, maybe there are some procedures that need to be reassessed," said Tolentino.

But Tolentino saw no reason to ground the entire fleet of Hueys.

"There is no need to ground the Hueys because based on the initial findings, there was no problem with the aircraft," he said.

The Air Force currently has 53 Hueys, 11 of which were acquired just this month through a US grant.

On Tuesday, a Huey helicopter crash landed in Liloan, Cebu, while its pilot was practicing auto-rotation or landing the aircraft without power. Less than a month ago, another Huey crashed in Lapu-Lapu City, killing two airmen and seven civilians on the ground.



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PRO-GMA, BUT …

Solons say House will be independent

By Norman Bordadora

MEMBERS OF THE PRO-ADMINISTRATION coalition in the House of Representatives yesterday claimed that the House would be independent and would not be a rubber-stamp of Malacañang when the 14th Congress opens in July.

"The House works independently and will always decide for the national interest and what's good for the country," House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles of Davao City told the INQUIRER.

The latest election tallies showed that the House would still be dominated by allies of President Macapagal-Arroyo who were instrumental in blocking two consecutive impeachment attempts against her in 2005 and 2006.

Nograles, who said he won virtually unopposed in his district in Davao, is one of 92 Lakas members said to have won in their respective congressional districts.

More than a hundred seats have also been reportedly won by pro-administration candidates, bringing to almost 200 the ruling coalition's expected majority in the next Congress.

"We will be independent while lending support for President Arroyo's legislative agenda and priorities," said Bacolod Rep. Monico Puentevella.

"We will use positively our numbers to push the social payback agenda of the President," he added.

Puentevella said the House' independence does not mean political obstructionism. He called on the would-be members of the minority to refrain from using the House for "political terrorism."

"The House needs to focus on sustaining the country's economic gains," he added.

The House majority allied with Ms Arroyo had been criticized for using its sheer number to defeat the two impeachment complaints against the President.

The complaints stemmed from allegations that Ms Arroyo cheated in the May 2004 elections and that government funds were used to ensure her victory.

Palace defends TU's Maguindanao sweep

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

EXECUTIVE SECRETARY EDUARDO ERMITA defended the 12-0 victory of Team Unity in Maguindanao, saying there were no opposition officials there to campaign for the Genuine Opposition.

In his weekly press conference, Ermita welcomed the investigation of the Commission on Elections on reports of election manipulation in Maguindanao. He also called on the teacher, who claimed to have been forced at gunpoint to tamper with the results, to come out in the open.

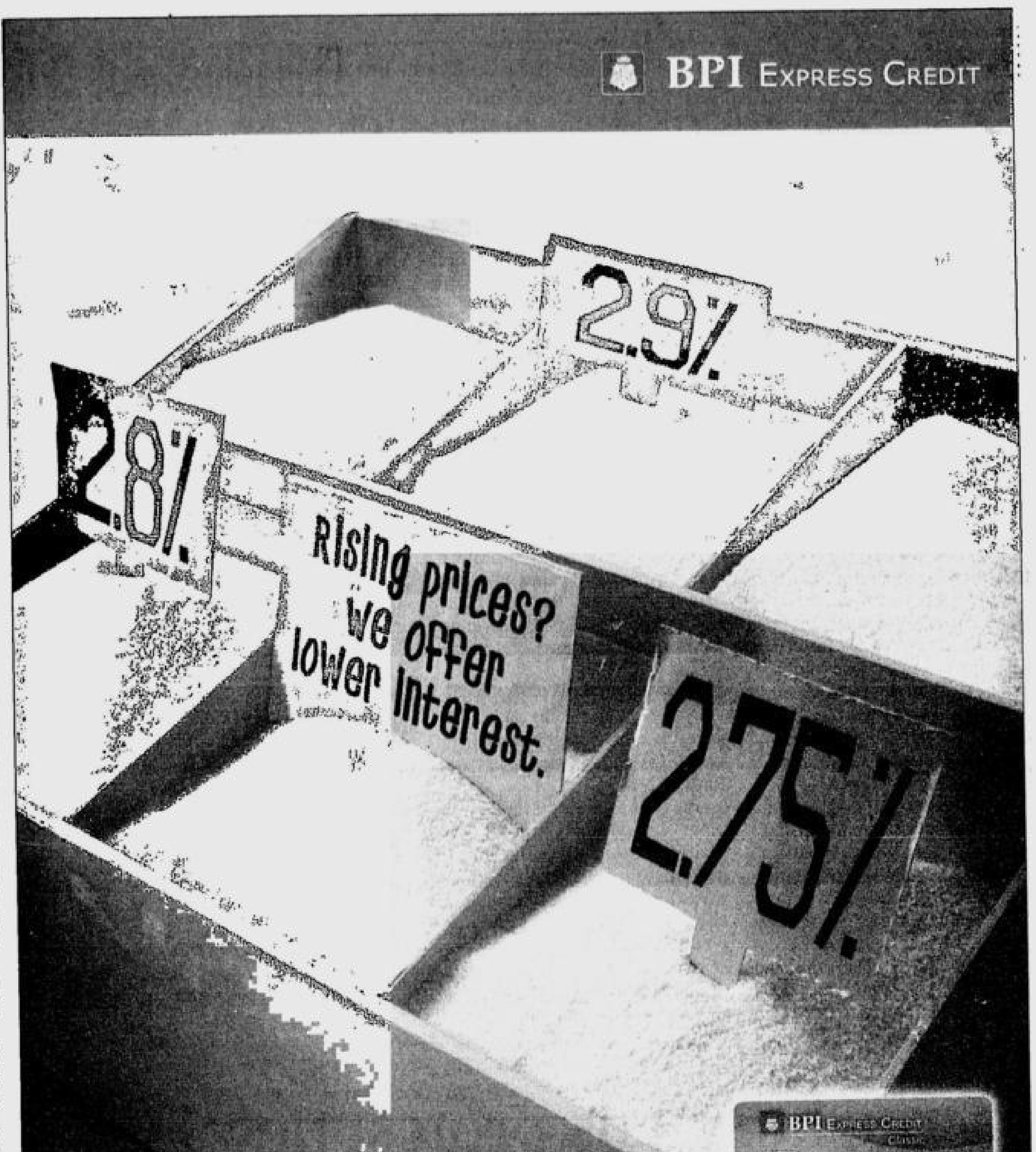
Ermita also protested why Maguindanao was being "singled out" when TU had swept the elections in at least eight other provinces.

"How can you fault the people in that area if the other party has no machinery and, in fact, do not have any candidate for mayor and is under the control of the (administration) alliance," he said, quoting the explanation given to him by Maguindanao Rep. Simeon Datumanong.

Ermita noted that there were no opposition candidates or watchers in the province.

GO candidates did not even bother to campaign in Maguindanao. "If you do not go there, if you are not seen there, chances are they might forget to vote for you," Ermita said.

He said administration candidates won 73 out of 81 gubernatorial positions, 203 out of 219 congressional districts and 109 out of 119 city mayoralty positions.



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GO, Left in cahoots to ruin economy–TU

By Cynthia D. Balana

TEAM UNITY YESTERDAY ACcused the Genuine Opposition and a leftist group of forging an "unholy alliance" to wreck the country's economic takeoff with their charges of electoral fraud against pro-administration senatorial candidates.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, TU chief of the media bureau and campaign strategist, said the GO-affiliated Liberal Party faction of Sen. Franklin Drilon and left-wing party-list groups led by Bayan Muna had been launching media offensives to discredit the May 14 electoral process.

Insidious objective

"While the LP wants to void the Maguindanao elections, Bayan Muna and other left-wing party-list groups allied with GO have been blaming the Armed Forces for their failure to dominate the party-list polls," Evardone said.

"These groups have one and the same insidious objective, which is to paint the elections as dishonest and fraud-marred. They are merely using the claimed vote-monitoring work to cover up their real intent, which is to destabilize the government in the guise of protesting alleged poll cheating," he added.

'Retail cheating'

According to Evardone, the two groups claim there has been "retail cheating" in favor of TU bets just to make people doubt the results of the elections.

He said the alliance was also stepping up its efforts to destabilize the administration following the overwhelming victory of most pro-administration candidates in the congressional and local races.

"The congressional results have clearly made the pro-administration coalition in the House of Representatives bigger and stronger and with numbers enough to readily crush any impeachment resolution against the president in the chamber," Evardone said.

In the contests for 81 gubernatorial seats, for instance, he said that 72 of the 73 governors-elect proclaimed thus far by the Commission on Elections all belong to TU.

In the congressional races, 171 of the winners so far proclaimed by the Comelec belong to either one of the six ruling-coalition parties or to other pro-administration blocs, he said, while 8 pro-Arroyo House bets are leading in the canvassing.

'Brighter than ever'

With the senatorial tally by the Comelec still ongoing, Evardone said that TU was hoping to snag 6 to 8 seats on proclamation day.

He said that economic indicators were brighter than ever, citing the post-elections economic takeoff that has pushed the stock market to a 10-year high and the peso to break the 45: $1 barrier, its best performance in almost seven years.

"The mainstream opposition and its leftist and ultra-rightist allies have come to realize that they have to spoil the party of the nation and carry out even the most extreme effort just to sabotage or subvert these awesome gains and, hopefully, topple the Arroyo presidency," Evardone said.

TU spokesman wins new term

THE MEDIA BUREAU DIRECTOR of Team Unity, Ben Evardone, was reelected governor of Eastern Samar by a landslide, trouncing his opponent by a margin of almost 100,000 votes in last week's elections.

The Lakas governor was proclaimed winner by the Commission on Elections with 22,467 votes over United Opposition candidate Camilo Camenforte who garnered 23,011 votes, according to a Team Unity statement.

Convincing win

In the vice gubernatorial race, Evardone's running mate, Leander Geli of Lakas was also proclaimed winner by after getting 102,169 votes as against the 9,456 votes of his UNO opponent, Rodolfo Anastarias.

Team Unity said it also won convincingly in the province with San Policarpio delivering a 12-0 vote, Hernani with 9-2-1 and Balangkayan with 11-1, all in favor of the TU ticket.

In the race for the lone congressional seat, Teodolo Coquilla bested Elda Libanan by garnering 86,232 votes as against the latter's 78,960 votes.

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Japanese PM agree to put commitments in writing

From page A1

Miriam Defensor-Santiago in the President's delegation.

Santiago is chair of the Senate foreign relations committee and will be shepherding the Jpepa through the Senate ratification process.

Ms Arroyo pointed to Santiago as the one who would see to the ratification of the Jpepa in the Senate.

The Jpepa, which the President and former Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi signed in Helsinki last September, has been billed as a "new age" free trade agreement that will open unparalleled Japanese market access and investment for the Philippines.

Environmentalists alert

However, the agreement, which has been submitted for ratification by the Senate, ran into early controversy when environmentalists claimed that certain tariff liberalizing provisions would open the way for the export of Japanese hazardous and toxic wastes to the Philippines.

This single concern has overshadowed public discussion on the agreement, as Ms Arroyo has been at pains to explain to her hosts in the course of her visit here.

At a Philippine business seminar for 200 Japanese businessmen early yesterday, Tohru Tsuji, chair of the Japan-Philippines Economic Cooperation Committee (JPECC) and chair of the giant Marubeni Corp., told the President that Japanese businessmen expect the early ratification of Jpepa.

He also noted that the ratification was being awaited amid the "extremely significant and timely" events in the Philippines, meaning the elections.

Invite to invest, invest, invest

Finally, she invited the Japanese businessmen to "invest, invest, invest" in the Philippines.

She said Japan and the Philippines have been clarifying the toxic waste issue: That Japan will not allow the export of toxic waste and the Philippines will not allow itself to be the dumping ground of waste from Japan or anywhere else.

"Jpepa provides market access to each other (Japan and the Philippines), trade and investment facilitation, technical cooperation and capacity building. All this will make resource flows better. It will make for economies of scale.

"It is very important for our farmers, fishermen and food processors because it opens the Japanese market to our agriculture products—fish, seafood, poultry—and also provides our manufacturers with critical infrastructure parts," the President said.

She said that if these issues are clarified, "I believe no reasonable senator will oppose the ratification of this agreement,"

Santiago said the senators would have to make a broader bipartisan view of the treaty considering how important it is.

Forego instant gratification

"In effect Jpepa will work toward a free trade regime which means there will be no more barriers between the two countries. In a sense, we shall be losing something because Japanese products will not be paying as much tariffs but the Philippines economy will benefit. Japanese businessmen are just waiting for Jpepa so they can go to the Philippines and put in millions of dollars in investments," she said.

"So overall we might have to forgo instant gratification but in the end we will end up a clear winner," Santiago said.

She said the problem of toxic waste is a marginal issue at this point.

"We will be missing the boat if we don't approve this as our neighbors, Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore, have already signed similar treaties with Japan," she said

Santiago said that she was hopeful that if she can put this issue properly to her colleagues, the agreement will pass the Senate.

International outlook

"Even if the Senate will be dominated by the opposition, I think senators take a more international outlook on national policy issues unlike the House which is more parochial. I think it will be able to get through," she said.

If she is still chair of the foreign relations committee, she foresees ratification in two to four weeks at most from the opening of the new Congress on July 22.

But she is also hopeful that six Team Unity senators will make it.

Trade pushing East Asia nations into global players

By Leah P. Makabenta

TOKYO—DEEPENING TRADE relations are pushing the nations of East Asia together into integration that will not only transform the countries individually but also push the region into a position of global economic and diplomatic influence.

The region's leading political and business leaders are to meet in the two-day 13th Future of Asia conference that opens here today to refine their vision of an integrated East Asian community and to propose how this is to be achieved.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, as chair of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Asean), leads this year's speakers, who include Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, Lee Kuan Yew, the Minister Mentor of Singapore, former Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad, and Han Myeong-Soek, the former prime minister of South Korea.

The theme of the conference is "Deepening cooperation toward a true community," and will include sessions on India and Vietnam, the fast emerging growth centers, regional stability, and the future of Asian currencies 10 years after the crisis.

The annual conference sponsored by the Nihon Keizai Shimbun media group, has been held since 1995 to deepen understanding between Japan and other Asian nations. Top officials and corporate leaders from throughout the region are invited to discuss issues in Asia and to share their visions of the future.

According to Philippine Ambassador to Japan Domingo Siazon Jr., this vision is essentially for an East Asian economic community and subsequently an integrated East Asian community similar to the European Union.

He said the difference was that unlike the EU, the process started with trade and natural market forces, not with regional agreements.

Private hospitals protest new law, threaten 'holiday'

From page A1

Philippines (PHAP), which includes as members three big Metro Manila hospitals, will decide today whether it will push through with the first day of the hospital holiday scheduled tomorrow.

The decision will depend on the results of a dialogue with Department of Health officials over PHAP concerns about Republic Act No. 9439 (or the Hospital Detention Law) principally sponsored by Senators Manuel Villar, Sergio Osmeña and Pia Cayetano.

If the dialogue proves unproductive, the PHAP will proceed with its plans, with holidays to be held two or three times a month until December, according to its spokesperson Dr. Rustico Jimenez.

Once the holiday is in effect, only urgent cases will be attended to, and those seeking simple consultations will be turned away, Jimenez said.

He said the PHAP had about 400 to 500 members nationwide, including St. Luke's Medical Center, UST Hospital and Medical City.

Sought for comment, Health Undersecretary Alex Padilla appealed to the PHAP not to push through with its planned holiday, saying the doctors' fears would not materialize just yet.

'Antipoor' law

The PHAP is objecting to RA 9439 because of its long-term effects that will harm the poor people that it is seeking to serve, Jimenez said.

Under the law, officers of medical institutions are barred from preventing a patient from leaving a hospital or refusing him/her medical certificates and the like over unpaid bills, as long as the patient issues a promissory note to pay.

The penalty for violators is imprisonment of up to six months and a fine of as much as P50,000.

But Jimenez pointed out that private hospitals needed sources of funds to pay for medicines, equipment and employees' salaries.

"They said this law was supposed to help the poor, but it is actually antipoor. If we don't get paid by the patients, where will we get the money for their medicine and for our staff? If the hospitals close down, who will attend to the patients?" he said in a phone interview.

According to Jimenez, many hospitals have problems with unpaid bills. Only about one in 10 patients who issue promissory notes actually pay their hospital bills, and most of them give fictitious names or addresses, he said.

Jimenez said the law would unduly penalize private hospitals without addressing their problems.

He said there should be sources of funds for poor patients unable to pay their bills in private hospitals, or incentives for these hospitals.

Brain drain

Jimenez said hospitals' lack of funds was also contributing to the brain drain, or the exodus of nurses and doctors from the Philippines to seek higher salaries and benefits in other countries.

Per his account, private hospitals do not wish to detain patients over unpaid bills.

Neither are these hospitals making a habit of it, he said, adding that as long as such patients spoke sincerely with the staff, they were allowed to leave.

Jimenez also said the PHAP's planned hospital holiday was not intended to harm patients but to show the government that its hospitals alone could not handle all patients, and that there was a need to also consider the problems of private hospitals.

"We will still be attending to emergency cases. It's only the nonurgent cases that we will turn away," he said.

Patients of PHAP members will also be given prior notice of a hospital holiday, he said.

But Undersecretary Padilla said the DOH still had to draft the implementing rules and regulations of RA 9439.

"We're asking the private hospitals to join us in drafting the rules and regulations to offset the situation prejudicial to them," he said. "We would rather do it with them than without them."

Padilla expressed hope that the PHAP would drop its planned holiday, saying it was part of its corporate and social responsibility to care for patients.

"[The holiday] will affect the people. The people will suffer," he said.

Campaign mileage

The Philippine Hospitals Association (PHA), of which the PHAP is a member, backs the latter's objection to RA 9439.

But PHA executive officer Dr. Irineo Bernardo said its members would show displeasure by, say, wearing T-shirts bearing messages of protest, and would not go as far as mounting a hospital holiday.

Bernardo said RA 9439 was passed with a lack of understanding of the hospital industry.

He raised the suspicion that the law was passed in time for the midterm elections, so that its sponsors could use it to earn mileage during the campaign.

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Inquirer.net drew 1.3 million viewers on Election Day

From page A1

remained elevated throughout the week.

New server capacity

Despite the heightened traffic, inquirer.net's revised server architecture easily handled the situation, according to chief operating officer Robert Gantuangco.

"We're capable of handling much higher levels of traffic and this surge didn't even reach a quarter of our new server capacity," Gantuangco said.

Readers on inquirer.net checked out the site's "liveblogging" of the elections through its running account, as well as the latest tallies on the "Eleksyon 2007" special site.

Also driving traffic was the site's Google-powered Election Map, which highlighted the differences between the number of voters in 2004 and 2007 by town and province.

Waistline tied to urinary ...

From page A1

meeting in Anaheim.

At a press briefing, Dr. Steven A. Kaplan from Weill Cornell Medical College, New York, noted that waist size is one component of the so-called metabolic syndrome, which signifies an elevated risk of heart disease and diabetes.

"It is becoming very clear that when you have multiple components of the metabolic syndrome, you can bet that you will have components of pelvic dysfunction, which we would define as sexual dysfunction and voiding dysfunction," Kaplan said.

He and his colleagues tested the idea that waist circumference may be a useful predictor of prostate volume and the severity of pelvic dysfunction.

They grouped 88 men (average age, 62 years) with moderate or severe untreated voiding symptoms by waist circumference—30-36 inches, 36-40 inches, and more than 40 inches.

Increasing waist circumference was significantly associated with "every parameter we looked at," Kaplan said.

Prostate volume, PSA level, voiding symptom score, erectile dysfunction, and ejaculatory dysfunction all increased as waist size increased, he explained.

"The results were simply remarkable. They even surprised us," Kaplan commented.

"We have no doubt, at least from this cohort of patients, that increasing waist circumference is associated with worsening male health—voiding and sexual function."

This study, according to Kaplan, shows that obese men are at increased risk of pelvic dysfunction and can be "easily diagnosed" by measuring waist circumference. *Reuters*

Corrections

IN THE MAY 18 ISSUE, the caption of a photo accompanying an Entertainment story on Page H4—"Hearing-impaired but also a role model"—misspelled the names of some of the winners of the Miss Teen Philippines pageant. The winners are Priscilla May Navidad—not Priscilla Mae Natividad; Byrne—not Bryne—Marchan; and Tamara Johansson—not Johansen.

* * *

IN THE MAY 23 ISSUE, a front-page story — "Bayan Muna blames AFP for fall from top spot" — misstated that Neri Colmenares is the second nominee of the party-list group Bayan Muna. Colmenares is Bayan Muna's third nominee.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, the caption of a photo on Page A13 misspelled the name of an Army captain who is on trial for allegedly participating in the 2006 coup plot. The soldier's name is Capt. Ruben Guinolbay — not Guinolboy.

* * *

IN THE SAME ISSUE, a Metro story on Page A24 — "It's Recom Echiverri in Caloocan City" — misstated that Vice Mayor-elect Luis "Tito" Varela is the running mate of reelected Mayor Enrico "Recom" Echiverri. Varela is the running mate of Luis Asistio. Echiverri's running mate is Henry Cammayo.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to the Day Desk, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City, fax Nos. 897-47-93/94; e-mail address: daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Lorna Kalaw Tirol, readers' advocate, e-mail address: readersadvocate@inquirer.com. ph or fax Nos. 897-47-93/94, Attn: Readers Advocate. Her phone number is 897-8808 Local 342.

RP, Australia finalize SOFA

By Michael Lim Ubac

THE PHILIPPINES AND AUSTRALIA QUIETly approved in principle the State of Visiting Forces Agreement (Sofa) early this month, which provides for the legal framework for the increased presence of Australian troops in the country.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and Australian Prime Minister John Howard will formalize the military accord during her state visit to Australia from May 30 to 31, shortly after brief visits to Japan and New Zealand.

Ambassador Tony Hely said the contents of the military document had been agreed between both countries.

"We're now talking about having the texts signed. They will not be signed by the President, probably by the defense secretaries. I think, the President and our Prime Minister will witness the ceremony," said Hely at a luncheon briefing with the Malacañang Press Corps yesterday.

Asia forms security crisis team

ASIA'S LARGEST SEcurity forum, which includes the US, the European Union and China, is forming a quick-reaction group to respond to outbreaks of war and political crises, diplomats said yesterday.

The move by the 26-member ASEAN Regional Forum is considered a crucial step in deflecting criticism that it is an annual talk-shop incapable of dealing with security threats and conflicts in the volatile Asia-Pacific region.

Senior diplomats meeting in Manila this week are finalizing the creation of the so-called "Friends of the Chair," a four-member ministerial-level group that can be rapidly convened when security threats erupt, said M. C. Abad Jr., a diplomat who helps oversee the forum.

The group would gather facts and recommend steps that could immediately be taken when ARF is not in session, Abad said. It will be composed of ARF's current, incoming and past chairmen, positions held only by foreign ministers from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, and one minister from outside the region, he said.

"This is a step beyond dialogue and confidence building into addressing real security challenges," Abad told The Associated Press.

The arrangements for the crisis-response group are expected to be approved by ASEAN foreign ministers meeting in Manila in August, Philippine Foreign Undersecretary Erlinda Basilio said.

Founded in 1994, ARF has been hobbled by the diversity of its members and its consensus-based decision making. Since its birth, it has focused on building trust among its members through dialogue and confidence-building measures.

Every year, ARF brings together Asian and Western powers, providing an important forum for discussing an array of threats from North Korea's nuclear ambitions to al-Qaida-linked terror threats in Southeast Asia.

The 10 ASEAN members are Brunei, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. *AP*

Salonga asks SC to reject Ong

By Leila B. Salaverria

WHILE MALACAÑANG MULLS OVER WHAT to do with its controversial appointment of Sandiganbayan Justice Gregory Ong to the Supreme Court, two non-government organizations led by former Senate President Jovito Salonga went ahead and petitioned the Supreme Court to annul Ong's appointment over questions regarding his citizenship.

The move adds a new twist to the apparent impasse between the Palace and the Judicial and Bar Council (JBC) on the issue of Ong's appointment.

Salonga, representing the groups Kilosbayan and Bantay Katarungan Foundations, argued that a Department of Justice opinion that Ong was a natural-born Filipino was not enough to erase the fact that his birth certificate states that he is "Chinese." Salonga said Ong's citizenship could only be changed or corrected by a judicial order.

Malacañang had recalled the appointment of Ong only a day after it was issued on May 16 after such questions were raised. Being a natural-born Filipino is a requirement for a high court position.

However, it has not yet remanded the case to the JBC.

It was the position of justice secretary Raul Gonzalez that Ong's fate rests entirely with the President. He said the JBC, which is mandated by the Constitution to screen and recommend nominees to the tribunal, had already lost jurisdiction over it when it submitted to the President its shortlist of eight nominees—including Ong.

The 8-member JBC, headed by the Chief Justice, met the other day and received Ong's defense of his natural-born status but conceded that they could not decide anything because Malacanang has not sent Ong's case back to them.

Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita confirmed that the appointment of Ong was still being held at the Office of the President because they were studying their options.

"This is a very delicate matter and therefore we are studying options as to how long to hold on (to his appointment) here in the Office of the President before forwarding it to the Supreme Court," Ermita said in his weekly press conference.

"We are studying several issues. We want to know if—and it's a big if—this is referred back to the JBC, whether we will specify what it is that needs to be validated or whether we will just say 'please review and go over the qualifications again of all the nominees'. The nature of our endorsement or referral back to JBC, that is what we are studying," Ermita said.

Ermita said the President may also exhaust the 90 days she has under the Constitution to fill up the vacancy in the tribunal.

"Of course when we talk of options, there could very well be one, two, three, four options and I cannot tell you right now because precisely we are in that process of determining the options we will recommend to the President. Anything can happen," he said when asked if the President might choose another appointee.

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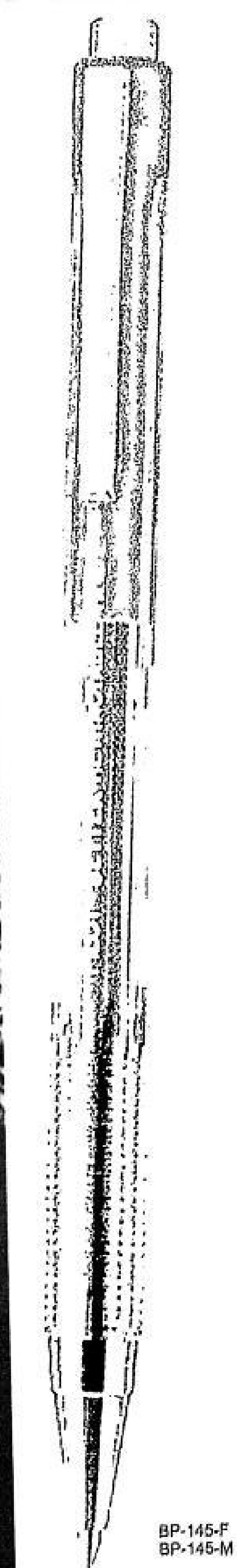

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Mindanao fraud detailed by poll watchdogs

From page A1

P300 to a foreign observer, an Indonesian female he identified only as Marini.

Marohomsalic surmised that the person mistook Marini for a Filipino given her Malay features.

"Most buyers were inside the poling precincts coaching voters. Witnesses included local and foreign observers," the watchdogs said in a statement.

250 votes each; only 169 voters

Marohomsalic said a Pakistani observer asked another person offering bribe money in exchange for votes in Bacolod-Kalawi town if what he was doing wasn't illegal

"The person only answered, 'Do you want me to kill you'? (*Gusto mo patayin kita?*)'," Marohomsalic said in a press conference.

Namfrel chair for Marawi City Mama B. Palawan presented an election return (ER) showing all 12 senatorial candidates of Team Unity (TU) sweeping the elections in Barangay Punod.

The TU candidates garnered 250 votes each even if the barangay only had 169 registered voters.

"Maybe even the ghosts voted there," he remarked.

Palawan said the stranger thing was that an "unheard of" party-list group called NELFFI, or Novelty Entrepreneurship and Livelihood for Food, also swept the party-list race in the same barangay.

Watchers barred

Palawan also noted what he called an "oversupply" in ERs after getting his hands on two ERs with different serial numbers but reporting the same results in a single barangay.

There was also an ER accomplished without the signatures of any of the election inspectors save for a faded thumbmark which Palawan said looked like it was made with "a child's thumb or a cat's paw."

SUPPORTERS of congressional candidate Vicente Belmonte try to block the transfer of two ballot boxes from Iligan City to Tubod, Lanao del Norte, Wednesday night. INQUIRER MINDANAO / DENNIS JAY SANTOS

A PPCRV volunteer identified as Nursaide Dipatuan was mauled by still unidentified men inside the campus of the Mindanao State University.

"His face was smashed," the lawyer said.

The watchdogs' statement said watchers of PPCRV and another group were denied access by the board of canvassers (BOCs) to polling precincts in several towns.

Marahomsalic said the BOCs were assisted by "members of the (Philippine National Police) and soldiers."

During the provincial tabulation, said watchers from PPCRV, C-CARE, and Namfrel were not allowed to observe the tabulation of election returns held at the Lanao del Sur provincial capitol and the MSU campus.

Watchers were also barred by BOCs from monitoring the canvassing in Marawi City National High School.

No indelible ink

Other charges detailed in the report to Comelec included:

- Failure to apply indelible ink on the fingers of those who had voted.
- Proliferation of campaign materials inside the polling areas.
- Placement of ballot boxes and other election paraphernalia outside the polling precincts.
- In many areas, votes were already being tabulated at the municipal level while ERs remained unaccomplished.

Marohomsalic said volunteers who were raising objections during the tallying at the precincts and during provincial canvassing were simply ignored by canvassers and election inspectors.

The disclosures of flagrant cheating in Lanao del Norte followed revelations earlier this week by a public school teacher in Maguindanao that she and other teachers were forced at gunpoint to fill out ballots with the names of TU candidates.

Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao are part of the Automous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)—scene of alleged cheating in favor of President Macapagal-Arroyo during the 2004 presidential election, according to the "Hello Garci" tapes.

Comelec officials in cahoots

Fresh accounts of how cheating supposedly occurred in Maguindanao emerged yesterday. One account came from a teacher who acted as a member of the board of election inspectors (BEI) in one town of that province.

The alleged Maguindanao fraud gave the TU candidates a sweeping 12-0 victory in the province.

Interviewed through her cellular phone on the program "Arangkada" aired over ABS-CBN-Cebu's dyAB, the teacher, who identified herself as Bai, accused local Comelec officials, the police and the military of collusion in committing fraud.

Bai reiterated there were no elections in Maguindanao since the teachers were ordered to fill out the ballots starting at 11 p.m. on the eve of the May 14 polls.

She also said that representatives from Namfrel were prohibited from entering voting centers in Shariff Aguak.

Bai said that she knew her life, along with those of the other teachers, was in danger but she had to expose the truth.

She said two other teachers were willing to attest to her statement.

Probe welcomed

Bai said nobody went to the polling precincts on Election Day and that anyone could see that the people who supposedly had voted had no marks of the indelible ink on their fingers.

Another whistle-blower, named "Kareem," said in Filipino on GMA television network:

"We were given a list of senators. That was what we wrote on the ballot. It was 12-0 for TU," said Kareem.

"We were the ones who actually wrote the names on the ballots. Look at the handwriting on the ballots. Only three people did it. The handwritings were the same."

Maguindanao provincial administrator Norie Unas said the provincial government was willing to help in the Comelec probe of alleged election fraud in the province.

"The provincial government is ready to assist them in any way to help clear the festering issue once and for all so this thing will already rest," Unas said.

Education officials in ARMM yesterday led hundreds of local public school teachers to the provincial capitol in Shariff Aguak to denounce the unnamed teachers who alleged there was wholesale poll fraud in the province.

"Whoever they are, they should come out into the open with their identities so as not to destroy the image of the other teachers," local education official Udtog Kawit said.

'Grand design'

Unas, who is also the spokesperson for Gov. Datu Andal Ampatuan, described the Maguindanao poll controversy as a "grand design" by people not happy with the TU's 12-0 sweep in the province.

"Why blame us for this. They (the opposition) ought to be blamed for not campaigning in Maguindanao," Unas said.

TU strategists have said the 12-0 result showed the power of the "command vote" in areas where pro-administration officials hold sway—such as in Maguindanao, where Ampatuan is regarded as a political kingpin.

Unas bragged about Maguindanao's "participatory democracy" under Ampatuan.

2 sets of winners

Another problem emerged yesterday in South Upi town, also in Maguindanao, this time involving the proclamation of two sets of officials.

On May 15, local Comelec chief Monakiram Sambuang proclaimed Abdullah Campong as mayor-elect, Maria Sargan as vice mayor-elect, and eight councilors.

But a second certificate of canvass, or vote tally, showed another set of winning candidates for the town council.

Rodrigo Toriales, one of those on the first list of winners, told Radio dxMS he could not understand why strange things always happened in his town.

"We are the sure winners but our names were deleted from the CoC and the Comelec put other names, why?" he asked.

Maguindanao election supervisor Lintang Bedol could not be reached for comment.

Poll body set to proclaim 9 new senators

From page A1

Loren Legarda (GO) was the top vote getter as of 5 p.m. yesterday, enjoying a lead of almost 160,000 votes over second placer Francis Escudero (GO).

Panfilo Lacson (GO) remained at No. 3 with less than 60,000 votes over Manuel Villar (GO). Independent candidate Francis Pangilinan was No. 5 followed by Benigno Aquino III (GO).

Edgardo Angara of Team Unity (TU) was at No. 7, followed by Alan Peter Cayetano (GO).

Joker Arroyo (TU) rose to ninth place after he emerged No. 1 in Albay, trading places with Gregorio

Honasan (GO) who slid down to 10th place.

GO candidates Antonio Trillanes IV and Aquilino Pimentel III were hanging on at No. 11 and No. 12, respectively.

Partial and unofficial

Pimentel was leading by only 4,057 votes over 13th placer Miguel Zubiri (TU). Zubiri was followed by fellow TU candidates Ralph Recto, Michael Defensor and Prospero Pichay.

The partial scores were computed by the INQUIRER from the CoCs read by the NBC.

Not included in the computation were votes canvassed from Marinduque and Mt. Province where discrepancies between the CoC and the statement of votes (SoVs) remained unresolved.

The Comelec is releasing its own partial and official results at a much slower pace than the ongoing canvassing. It did not release any bulletin yesterday. The last update was on Monday night.

Erasures on Sulu CoC

Yesterday, the NBC deferred the canvassing of votes from Sulu after lawyer Leila de Lima questioned the "erasures" on the CoC, which were "unauthenticated" by any signature.

De Lima, Alan Cayetano's lawyer, also questioned the zero vote of her client and of Aquino in the SoV for Luuk town.

There are two Cayetanos in the senatorial race—Alan of GO and Joselito of Kilusang Bagong Lipunan. In the SoV from Luuk, Joselito, who was earlier disqualified by the Comelec, even got 187 votes, De Lima noted. Joselito's disqualification, however, is not final.

Alan is seeking the declaration of Joselito as a nuisance candidate before the Supreme Court. Alan is No. 8 with 8,245,963 while Joselito is No. 30 with 346,199 votes.

Six provinces, one city

Canvassed yesterday were votes from Batangas, Camarines Sur, Zamboanga del Norte, Samar, Parañaque City, Albay and Iloilo.

Arroyo placed first in Albay with 299,781 votes. But Escudero, a fellow Bicolano, was a close second with 293,036 votes.

Sonia Roco, widow of the late Sen. Raul Roco of Naga, was fourth with 200,864 votes, following Legarda. The GO dominated the results from Albay at 7-3-2.

Recto 9th in Batangas

Recto fared poorly in his home province, where his wife Vilma Santos won the gubernatorial race. Recto was ninth with 432,448 votes, right behind Trillanes, who got 438,215 votes.

It was 8-2-2 in Batangas, where no GO ally ran for governor. Only two TU candidates—Recto and Angara—landed in the Magic 12 in the province.

Despite the promise of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez to give cash rewards to local leaders in Iloilo, who could give the administration a sweep, TU posted only a 6-5-1 advantage over GO.

It was Villar who emerged No. 1 in Iloilo, with 384,725 votes. The six TU candidates in the Magic 12 were Defensor, Angara, Zubiri, Arroyo, Recto and Pichay.

Pichay was the top scorer in Zamboanga del Norte, where TU also won a 7-5 over GO, with 149,265 votes.

But it was not enough to pull him up from the 16th place.

Some computers of Namfrel were downed by a virus Tuesday afternoon.

Reporters covering Namfrel's quick count waited more than 10 hours for an update that was finally released later than 10 p.m. Tuesday. *With reports from Cathy Yamsuan, Maan Festejo and Kathleen Olarte*

ELEKSYON 2007

COMELEC 100% of 154 overseas absentee voters CoCs & 73% of 104 local CoCs As of 5:00 p.m. May 23, 2007			NAMFREL 141,147 out of 224,748 precincts As of 4:46 p.m. May 23, 2007		
21	MAGSAYSAY	4,318,148	21	MAGSAYSAY	3,846,830
22	COSETENG	3,673,794	22	COSETENG	3,040,317
23	ORETA	2,857,858	23	ORETA	2,531,674
24	SINGSON	2,797,599	24	SINGSON	2,490,144
25	GOMEZ	1,835,842	25	GOMEZ	1,560,837
26	KIRAM	1,212,680	26	KIRAM	1,359,344
27	CHAVEZ	598,973	27	CHAVEZ	554,996
28	BAUTISTA	504,518	28	PAREDES	490,228
29	PAREDES	485,637	29	BAUTISTA	474,788
30	CAYETANO, J.	346,199	30	CAYETANO, J.	342,103
31	SISON	258,013	31	SISON	274,390
32	LOZANO	202,661	32	LOZANO	262,962
33	ESTRELLA	197,707	33	ESTRELLA	241,506
34	WOOD	195,880	34	WOOD	229,049
35	CANTAL	80,227	35	ENCISO	122,878
36	ORPILLA	65,456	36	ORPILLA	115,859
37	ENCISO	63,468	37	CANTAL	102,241

Elections in Basilan village took place on a pump boat

From page A1

goons ordered the ferryman to stop and the teachers to hand over the empty ballots. The armed men buckled down to work, filling out the ballots with the name of their candidate.

"They would not have stopped if not for the strong waves," Anak Mindanao Rep. Mujiv Hataman told the INQUIRER yesterday, quoting consolidated reports made by supporters of his party-list group in the area.

When the boat reached the island, the gunmen completed their "work" at the house of a community leader there, Hataman said. The election was over and the voters never saw a shadow of a ballot box at their polling precinct, he said.

Cases of election fraud in Mindanao, particularly in Basilan, were much more serious than what had been reported so far, according to the lawmaker.

Old-fashioned cheating

And fraud was not difficult to detect: The old formula of guns, goons and gold figured in most cases.

"Cheating here is actually old-fashioned and cases are an open secret," Hataman said in a phone interview. "This year's election was the worst in Basilan."

Hataman, a native of Basilan, urged the Commission on Elections not to turn a blind eye on these irregularities, saying poll cheats had been making a mockery of the democratic process in Mindanao for many years.

He had a wealth of stories—said to be common knowledge among Basilan residents—on how elections were rigged by powerful candidates in the province on Election Day.

In one instance, Hataman said, a candidate, who was sensing defeat, brought an armed policeman and barged into a polling precinct in Tairan town. They allegedly closed down the room and replaced the contents of the ballot box.

In Sumisip and Lantawan, he said, armed men working for separate candidates waited until the voting ended before rigging the ballots. "They emptied the boxes and replaced them with new ones containing the name of their candidate."

Oversupply of votes

Hataman said architects of fraud employed different tactics, depending on the culture and demographics in a particular area.

In areas inhabited by a good mix of Muslims and Christians, he said, money was added to the usual formula of force and intimidation.

Taha Basman, head of the Mindanao Research Institute, said one family in Lanao del Sur bought votes for as much as P20,000 each.

In Muslim-dominated areas, Hataman said, unscrupulous candidates simply paid off barangay captains who eventually supervised cheating in their areas.

Even Hataman's party-list group was not spared in the alleged cheating.

On Sunday, lawyer Joven Diamante of the watchdog group Bantay RA 7941 blew the whistle on a discrepancy in canvassing in Hadji Mohammad Ajul. With only 9,115 registered voters, the town yielded at least 26,939 votes for six party-list groups alone.

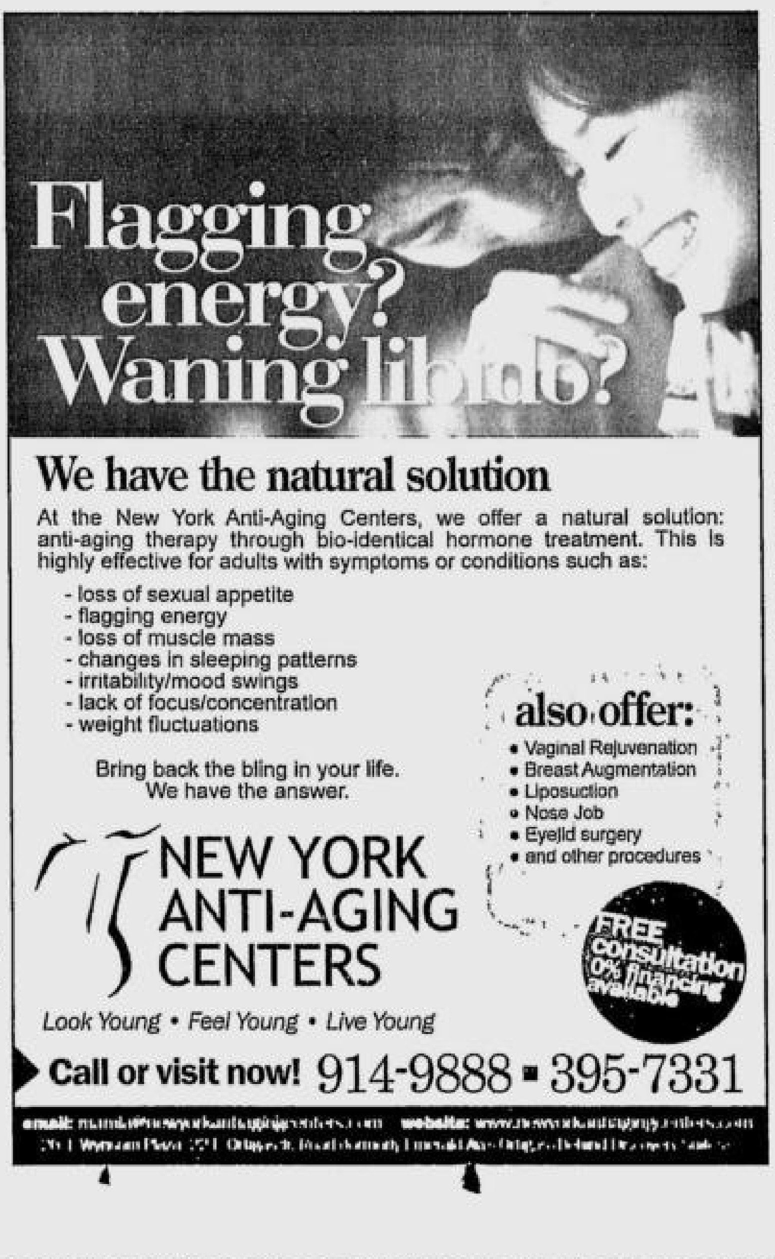
Highly unlikely results

Among the party-list groups were Anak Mindanao, which got 4,694.

The lawyer said he became suspicious when he noticed that the five other groups had been earlier accused of fronting for Malacañang—Aangat Tayo with 2,685 votes, Ahon Bayan with 4,449, Ang Laban ng Indiginong Filipino (Alif) with 5,075, Sulong! Barangay Movement with 4,973 and You Against Corruption and Poverty (Yacap) with 5,063.

Hataman said it was highly unlikely that Alif, whose nominees are from Lanao del Sur, even beat Anak Mindanao in its own bailiwick. He said even he was surprised that his group garnered more than 4,000 votes.

"We surveyed the different barangays and we were expecting only between 2,500 and 4,000 votes," he said. "It seems that whoever was behind the cheating made sure that our votes were also padded, thinking that we wouldn't complain."



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Pag-Ibig offers discounts to 'good payors'

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE PAG-IBIG FUND WILL GIVE A TWO PERcent discount to members who will pay their home loans on or before the due date starting next month, Vice President Noli de Castro announced yesterday.

De Castro, chair of the Housing and Urban Development Coordinating Council (HUDCC) and chair of Pag-Ibig Fund Board of Trustees, said he had directed the Fund's senior management to complete the guidelines covering the grant of the discount to members.

He said the discount was provided for under the a "Good Payor Incentive Program" which was announced by President Macapagal-Arroyo during the May 1 Labor Day Celebration as part of the package of non-wage benefits for the labor sector who generally comprises the membership of Pag-Ibig.

The program is a much-deserved reward to Pag-Ibig members who availed themselves of housing under the old guidelines with interest rates then ranging from 9 to 16 percent, De Castro said.

Fr. Ed now living the Eucharist – Fr. Robert

By Fe Zamora

PROCLAIMED PAMpanga Governor Fr. Ed "Among Ed" Panlilio is now "living the Holy Eucharist" as he actually practices the teachings of the Church in the governance of the province, militant priest Fr. Robert Reyes said yesterday.

"If a priest can bring people out of their complacency—that's the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass in practice," Reyes, who is now based in China, said in a telephone interview.

He said being a priest should not stop Panlilio from serving as governor, saying that this "is just one of the many facets" of Panlilio as a person.

"The priesthood is not everything. Fr. Ed is also a Kapampangan, he is also a Filipino," said Reyes, better known as the "running priest."

Reyes and Panlilio are Diocesan priests, and they were ordained in 1981 and 1982 respectively.

He also said that Panlilio lived in the University of the Philippines' parish in the '80s, where Reyes was the university chaplain. At that time, Panlilio was on sabbatical.

"Among Ed has no political ambition. He is not doing this for the money. You can't program these things, God allows it to happen," Reyes said.

He also threw his support behind reelectionist Isabela Gov. Grace Padaca, whose proclamation has been blocked by the members of the same political dynasty she toppled in the 2004 elections.

"Ed Among and Governor Padaca are fascinating reflections of the power of the marginalized," Reyes said.

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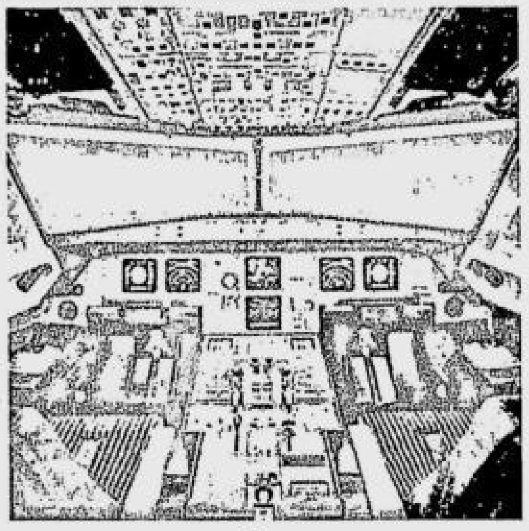

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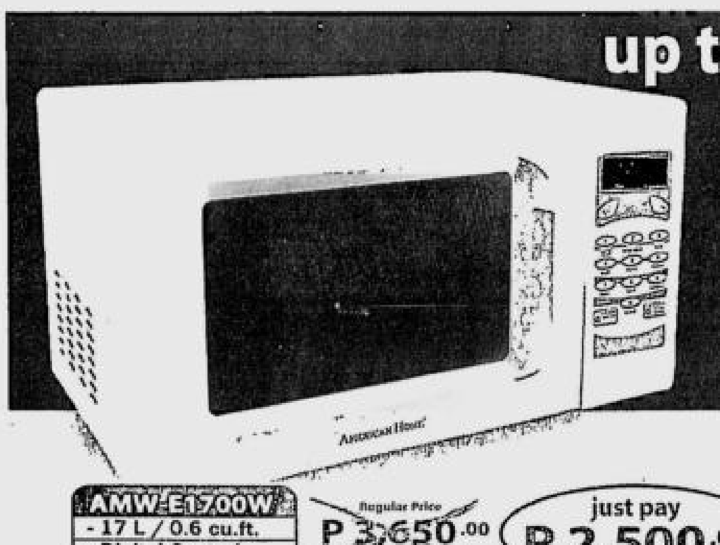

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'Lady with guts' sent to Mindanao

From page A1

have this lady with guts enough to accept the responsibility. It takes a woman to accept the awesome responsibility," Sarmiento said.

He said the Comelec had placed Shariff Kabunsuan under its control to "ensure that [the canvassing] would go smoothly."

He added that the poll body was prepared to call on the military to deploy more troops, particularly the Marines, "depending on the situation".

The Comelec assumes jurisdiction over an entire province, including its administrative functions, when it is placed under the poll body's control.

Limited control

But in the case of Shariff Kabunsuan, Sarmiento said he limited the Comelec's control to the deployment of military troops in the province.

"Normally, we take over even the local administrative functions but because of too many concerns we're handling now, we [limited control] to providing troop augmentation from the Armed Forces, not only the PNP (Philippine National Police)," Sarmiento told the INQUIRER.

Battling for governor

Three politicians—incumbent Gov. Bimbo Sinsuat of Lakas-Kampi, former Sultan Kudarat Mayor Tocao Mastura of Kampi and former ARMM Gov. Zacaria Candao of the United Opposition—are fighting for the post of governor.

While balloting was taking place on Election Day, two bomb explosions rocked Datu Udin Sinsuat town, wounding one civilian. In Sultan Kudarat town, a bomb explosion also wounded one civilian.

Hours later, after polling precincts closed, a bomb attack near the town hall of Sultan Kudarat, where canvassing of votes were being done, injured two people.

'They are scared'

In Matanog town, tension between supporters of warring local politicians has also erupted.

A few days after the elections, unidentified armed men torched a portion of the town hall of Buldon. No casualties were reported.

Earlier this week, unidentified armed men fired an M-203 grenade launcher at Parang Elementary school where votes were being canvassed. No casualties were reported.

Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos Sr. said that the commission en banc decided to place the province—which is part of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)—under its control upon the recommendation of Sarmiento, its commissioner in charge in the area.

"There has been complaints, particularly from the candidates [asking], why up to now the PBOC has not met. It's because the one supposed to head the PBOC *ay takot na takot* [fearful] for his safety," Abalos said.

Sarmiento said the first PBOC chair "did not take the responsibility" because of the "tension" among at least two gubernatorial candidates.

"There was apprehension ... They [the candidates] are vigorously and passionately contending for the position," Sarmiento said.

"We understand that some of the CoCs coming from the municipalities have already been forwarded to the PBOC. Unfortunately, there was no chair to convene the PBOC to canvass these," Abalos said.

Showing 'sovereignty'

The Comelec chair dismissed the idea of holding the canvassing of Shariff Kabunsuan votes in Manila.

"No. We stay put in Mindanao and do the canvassing there. Let me repeat, we have to show sovereignty there," Abalos said.

The Comelec had to rely on might to enforce its will in another troubled area in ARMM—Lanao del Norte.

A riot by protesters failed to deter police and election officers from moving the counting of votes cast in Iligan City to the provincial capitol in Tubod.

Supporters of Varf Belmonte, the opposition candidate for a House seat representing Iligan's first district, tried to prevent the transfer of the certificates of canvass (CoCs), throwing stones at policemen, who broke up their rally.

Several protesters and policemen suffered cuts and bruises, according to Supt. Virgilio Ranes, Iligan police chief.

Belmonte has rallied his supporters against the transport of the CoCs to the provincial capitol, saying the results could be rigged in favor of his opponent, Gov. Imelda Dimaporo, a candidate of the Arroyo administration.

Belmonte said Dimaporo wielded undue influence in the provincial capitol, being the chief executive.

Partial results

Belmonte was leading when the CoCs were canvassed yesterday.

Based on the partial, official results, Belmonte had 52,783 votes against Dimaporo's 35,150 votes. The other congressional candidate, Angelique Badelles of Kampi, got 39,315 votes.

Comelec Commissioner Nicodemo Ferrer issued an order banning members of the Lanao del Norte provincial security unit from the canvassing site.

Instead, Ferrer asked the military and the police to secure the Sangguniang Panlalawigan building.

Election officer Chuvasco Caiña led the transport of ballot boxes containing the CoCs to Tubod.

The ballot boxes were heavily guarded by the members of the SWAT team, policemen from the regional command and 32 Infantry Battalion Philippine Army soldiers.

In Digos City, Davao del Sur Rep. Douglas Cagas and his supporters continued their protest, this time against the decision of Comelec provincial supervisor Maria Febes Barlaan to refer to the Manila head office a controversy involving the CoCs of the towns of Matanao, Bansalan, Sulop and Malita.

Rep. Claude Bautista, Cagas' rival in the gubernatorial race, has petitioned the Comelec to exclude the CoCs from Matanao, Bansalan and Sulop.

Misuari defeated

Cagas, claiming there was an attempt to rig the Malita result in Bautista's favor, also wanted the CoC from the town excluded from the canvass.

"It is no longer within my capacity to resolve those cases," Barlaan said.

In Sulu, followers of Moro leader Nur Misuari continued calling on the Comelec to declare a failure of elections in the province following the defeat of their leader in the gubernatorial elections.

According to the Comelec count, Misuari had 19,121 votes while businessman Sakur Tan had 84,434 votes.

The total number of votes for Misuari was not even half the 53,096 votes that reelectionist Gov. Benjamin Loong got.

Misuari's Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) cited widespread fraud and disenfranchisement of voters as reasons in asking the poll body to void the result of the elections in Sulu.

The Legal Network for Truthful Elections (Lente) also reported widespread cheating in the island-province. *With reports from Richel Umel, Orlando Dinoy and Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao*

MAIN ATTRACTION: The Marikina City Footwear Museum, which features the Imeldific shoe collection continues to attract thousands of visitors curious to see the collection of shoes hoarded by the shopaholic former first lady. REUTERS

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6 Pinoy students win in int'l science fair

From page A1

tives' use of mathematics in their woven fabrics.

The team of Ivy Razel Ventura, Janine Cindy Santiago and Mara Elaine Villaverde, all 16, also won a Fourth Award in Team Projects for their study that explored the potential of Nudibranchs, or sea slugs, in tumor research.

Barroa and Umayam, and the team each received a $500 prize.

Luiji John Karlo Suarez, 17, won a scholarship award from the National Collegiate Inventors and Innovators Alliance-The Lemelson Foundation for his study of the potential of a type of bacteria in controlling pests in plants.

7,000 entries

All are incoming college freshmen. Most of them did the researches to fulfill a prerequisite for graduation, but little did they know they would reap awards for their efforts.

Their entries were among 7,000 that vied for awards at the Intel ISEF.

"We feel blessed, and happy. But until now it has not sunk in," Ventura said of her team's award. All three members of the team graduated from the Philippine Science High School in Quezon City.

Ventura's teammate, Villaverde considered the award a sign of the country's bright prospects in science research.

"I feel very inspired and thankful because we Filipinos can compete with other countries. We can be on the same level with them," she said.

Philippine Science Fair

The six students were among those who won the top prizes in the Intel Philippine Science Fair, a nationwide search for excellent science projects.

Intel and the Department of Education have been organizing the fair, which is designed mainly to encourage research and development among young students, since 1998.

Tulao said the entries to the local Intel science fair were improving in quality through the years.

"They were able to maintain a level of being competitive with other countries. From the Philippine perspective, we're keeping up with the trend of the researches and the results that have been generated," he said.

Prawns and tilapia

Barroa, a graduate of Capiz National High School in Roxas City, said he got his idea for his study from the school alumni who said that if prawns were cultured with Nile tilapia, they do not contract any disease.

"But they did not know what's causing that. So I researched about it on the Internet and in libraries, even in Manila, and made the experiment. With the help of my parents and teachers, I was able to do it," said the incoming political science student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

This is the first study about the potential of fish mucus as possible antibiotic, according to Barroa.

German institute's offer

A German research institute found Barroa's study, "Fish Mucus: Its Potential Antimicrobial Effects on Human Pathogens and Possible Role in Innate Immunity," so novel that it offered to buy it, but he refused.

"If they buy it, then the Philippines would not gain anything from it. So I merely agreed to a collaborative further study on it," Barroa said.

Kalinga's sense of symmetry

Umayam, a graduate of the Philippine Science High School in Cagayan Valley, said the indigenous people of Kalinga Apayao inspired her to do the study "Ethnomathematics in the Geomatric Patterns in Woven Fabrics of the Indigenous Kalingas of the Philippines."

She said that her major finding was that the Kalinga people used math, as can be seen in the order and symmetry in their woven fabrics.

"The Kalingas had no formal education but it (study) implies they have a sense of mathematics, specifically order, regularity and symmetry. They were unaware that they were applying math until I told them," said the incoming B.S. Statistics student at the University of the Philippines in Diliman, Quezon City.

Ventura, Santiago and Villaverde said they conducted the study, "Screening, Isolation and Characterization of Fluorescent Proteins from Nudibranchs (sea slugs)," to fulfill a school requirement, but drew inspiration from researches about the topic.

"We were required to come up with this research to graduate," Ventura, an incoming Chemistry student at UP Diliman, said, eliciting chuckles. "But eventually, we learned to love what we were doing."

"There was a research on proteins present in marine organisms. That's where we got the idea. So we thought, 'Why not try sea slugs?'" said Villaverde, an incoming Management Engineering student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Anti-bacterial agents

Their teammate, Santiago, is an incoming Electronics and Communications Engineering student at the Ateneo de Manila University.

Suarez, a graduate of the Doña Hortencia Salas Benedicto National High School in La Carlota City, said his mother, a Science teacher, and advisers had egged him on to do his study, titled "The potential of marine bioluminescent bacteria as antibacterial agents against two major rice diseases caused by xanthomonas orzyzae pv. Oryzicola."

With his study, he introduced a new way of controlling bacteria infection in plants to help farmers in the production of infection-free rice, Intel officials said.

IN THE KNOW

It's the world's largest pre-college science competition

THE ANNUAL INTEL INTERNATIONAL Science and Engineering Fair is touted as the world's largest pre-college science competition, with almost 1,500 students from more than 40 countries participating each year.

It was founded in 1950 by Science Service, a nonprofit organization based in Washington, DC. Intel became the competition's title sponsor in 1998.

Up for grabs are more than 600 individual and team awards with cash prizes. Each top three winners receives a $50,000-college scholarship. Additional awards worth over $2.5 million include tuition grants, internships, scientific equipment and field trips.

To compete at Intel Isef, which is held in a different city each year, students must first win in a regional or state fair.

At Intel Isef, students compete in 18 categories, including social sciences, biochemistry, earth science, engineering, environmental science, mathematical sciences, medicine and health, physics and astronomy. The projects are judged by more than 1,200 professionals.

A number of Filipinos have won in different categories through the years. Just last year, Raymond Joseph Amurao, then a fresh graduate from Marikina High School, placed third in the field of zoology for extracting oil from janitor fish, which could be used in making soap and biofuel.

In 2002, Dr. Josette Biyo, a teacher at the Philippine Science High School in Western Visayas, won the Intel Excellence in Teaching Award. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

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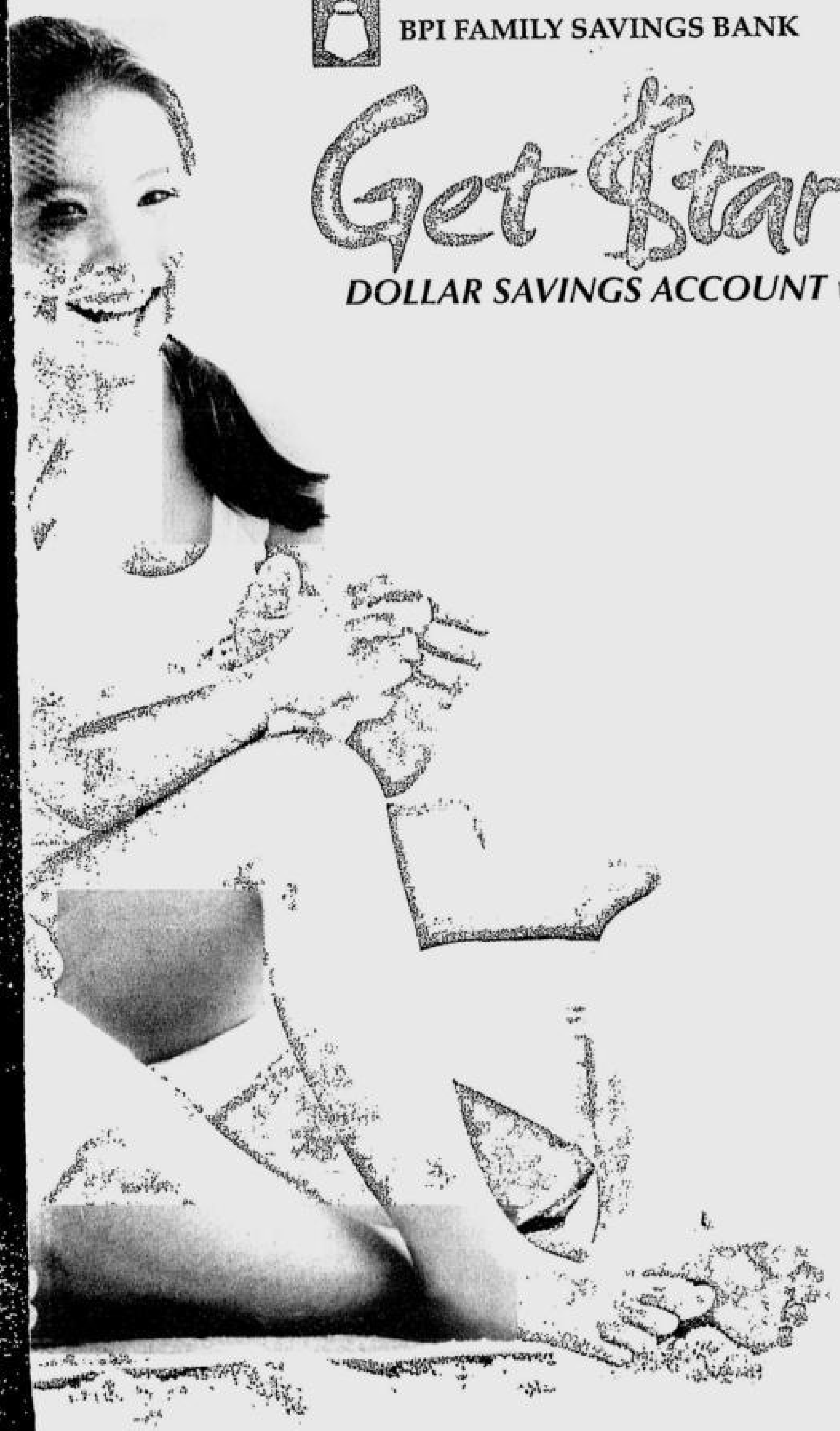

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Family affairs

AND EVEN AS REPORTS OF ELECTION FRAUD daily rock the news, daily giving the lie to the "peaceful" conduct of the May 14 exercise, attentive observers continue to be shocked at the impunity with which whole families have laid claim to public office and political power.

EDITORIAL

Whether in the national or local arena, parents and children, husbands and wives, brothers and sisters, cousins, uncles and aunts—not to speak of in-laws—seek, pass on, or exchange posts as though engaged in a game of musical chairs. Nothing new? To be sure. But there's no mistaking that it's getting worse, even if we have only the Arroyos (mother and two sons, brother-in-law, and possibly sister-in-law) to go by. And we certainly don't.

As a result of the enduring failure of Congress to pass an enabling law, the constitutional provision stating that "the State shall guarantee equal access to opportunities for public service and prohibit political dynasties as may be defined by law" remains a hollow stricture. (House Bill 5925, which had been endorsed for plenary discussion but was left high and dry when the last Congress adjourned in February, defines a political dynasty as "the concentration, consolidation or perpetuation of public office and political power by persons related to one another.") And, indeed, laughable if one considers the case of young Dato Arroyo (once variously described as receding, low-key, and uninterested in public life), who will now represent the first district of Camarines Sur after winning over the Bicolano, three-term mayor Abang Mabulo; his brother, Mikey, will again represent Pampanga's second district.

Nicholas D. Kristof thinks Hillary Rodham Clinton would make "a terrific [US] president." But he points out that in the event she is elected and serves two consecutive terms, it would mean that the White House would have been in the hands of only two families for seven consecutive terms—"not the kind of equal-opportunity democracy we aspire to."

Writes Kristof: "It would be unhealthy to vote for or against a person solely because of his or her family. But where there is a pool of similar candidates, it seems reasonable to count inherited (and wedded) advantage as one factor—and to give preference to those who rose on their own."

In these benighted parts, where, among other things, blood is spilled and lives are taken in the routine course of elections, and power outages force the counting of votes by candlelight, the political terrain is littered with dynasties whose members, whether qualified to lead or are mere seat-warmers, appear to be driven by a perfervid sense of entitlement. A few of the longtime dynasties that define the quality of the democracy we live in may be waning, but others—whether from the majority or the minority—are well on the way there, ensuring the continuing existence of an aristocracy and, thus necessarily, of a bottom class subsisting on the crumbs of patronage.

This sad state of family affairs is hopefully among the issues that Governor-elect Eddie Panlilio will do battle against as he sets out to make a difference in the province of Pampanga within his self-imposed time frame of three years. In an interview with the Inquirer's Tonette Orejas, the "miracle man," who had emerged from seemingly out of nowhere to capture the national imagination and went on to beat two formidable allies of the Palace, presented a program of governance promising leadership with a conscience, people empowerment and participation, and sustainable and integrated development.

Noteworthy is the second point, which, he said, would ensure "equal opportunities for growth among the people, regardless of ethnicity, gender and religion." It's a prescription at once fresh (coming as it does from a leader indebted only to his constituents and unencumbered by political baggage) yet familiar (having been both a demand and a battle cry of principled activists)—and ultimately appropriate for the national malaise.

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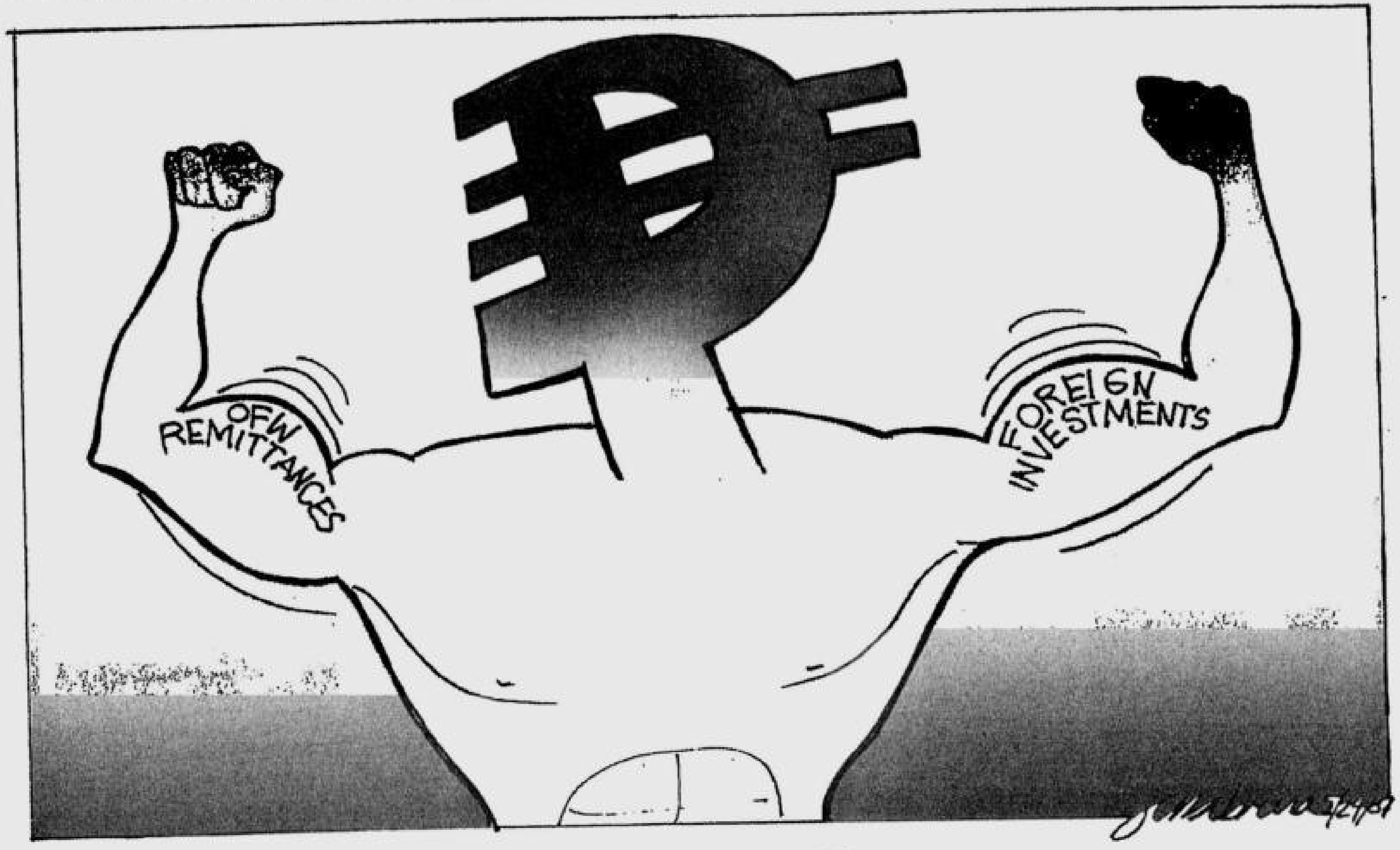

Sunset by installments

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

WHEN OUR ELECTIONS END, THE PHRASE "*onli in da Pilipins*" overloads columns and talk shows. Monday's polls were no exception. Maguindanao saw to that. And Lanao del Sur's padded voters' list cloned the decrepit National Press Club's election roster.

Priests and Catholic bishops of Bataan and Ilocos Sur, meanwhile, skewered vote-buying. Elections are a font for renewal, they asserted. But ballot *ukay-ukay* (hawking) made the precinct a den of thieves.

"What people require of their church is not just the catechism and sacraments but something much harder: to speak out against injustice," Bohol Chronicle noted. "This is the role of a prophet."

The role can be lethal. This was discovered by 1980 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Oscar Romero, El Salvador's archbishop, who taught the poor that God was the "liberator of his oppressed people." He was shot while saying Mass. On his flight to Brazil, Pope Benedict XVI told Associated Press: Blessed Romero's cause for canonization is "progressing."

That cuts little ice with El Shaddai, Iglesia Ni Cristo and similar groups. Mike Velarde and Eraño Manalo dabble as election brokers with comfortable panache. Indeed, what doth it profit a man if he gains proclamation, as election victor, but suffers the loss of his bank overdraft?

These flaws smudge what INQUIRER's Conrado de Quiros calls "shafts of light": people power in Pampanga and Naga City, tailspins of celebrity candidates and hoary family dynasties; self-effacing service by teachers and citizen poll sentries. There have been raucous but good natured balloting in most of the country's 308,222 polling stations, enabling the opposition to nail down Senate posts.

Our polls are a far cry from the drills of Burma's junta. That's *consuelo de bobo* ("fool's sedative"), my grandmother would snort. Must we be forever handcuffed into primitive manual counts, thanks to rigged Mega-Pacific computer-like deals? Married on Saturday, a Danish journalist recalls that the precinct registry reflected her married name Friday when she voted.

Tiny Timor-Leste chose, without fraud and violence, Nobel Laureate José Ramos-Horta as president. And giant Indonesia is striding toward more open governance. Remnants of Suharto's Golkar Party—like Marcos loyalists—yearn for a return of what Imelda calls "the most democratic period of our history."

"Vigorous campaigning and wide choice of candidates, seen in this week's elections, make the Philippines appear free," the Economist notes. But President Arroyo's misuse of the military as a crutch and the opposition's weaknesses enable political dynasties to maintain power. "Filipinos' votes are unlikely to change much."

"Will victors, like Cebu City's Mayor Tomas Osmeña and his Bando, offer only more of the same?" asked the regional paper Sun Star. That'd mean, among other things: an emerging water shortage crisis, chronic hunger that wastes kids, vigilante killings (173 remain unsolved) would probably resume. "Citizen participation is squelched by executive arrogance and legislative subservience .... Here is the future refusing to be born."

Can bitterly bickering national politicians draw up a common agenda for action? Surely, we can agree on the basics: water, nutrition, health care, education, family planning, whether called "Millennium Development Goals" or not. "We must learn to live together as brothers or perish together as fools," Martin Luther King cautioned.

What political scientist Samuel Huntington called history's "third wave of democratization" has faltered. In the early '80s, over 81 countries overthrew dictators and adopted multiparty free elections. "People power removed Ferdinand Marcos," along with Mobutu, Suharto, Fujimori, Pinochet, noted the UN Human Development Report. But today, many "do not seem to be in transition to anything—or have lapsed back to authoritarianism."

Will there be a fourth wave? That'll depend on ramming radical reforms, despite resistance by equally predatory family dynasties that have ousted others. Is there the hint of an answer in the provocative book, "La Bella Figura" by Corriere delle Sera columnist Beppe Severgnini?

Posted in Rome for two years, by the UN, one warmed up to Italians because there was so much that seemed Filipino about them. Here are "La Bella Figura" excerpts:

In Italy (the Philippines) elaborate rules coexist with breathtaking trivialities such as, oh, paying one's taxes (or safeguarding ballots) and other such gross indignities. We think it is an insult to our intelligence to comply with a regulation ... Obedience is boring.

Italians (Filipinos) consider tax evasion and lying outrageously about one's income to be normal behavior. If he were to cheat on taxes, two neighbors would come round to ask me how I did it. (And none would report him.)

One in three Italians (Filipinos) finds a job through a relative. One in five (like Filipino OFWs) has moved in the past 10 years—half the European average. And the national preoccupation with *la bella figura*—looking good, dressing well, cutting a stylish, dramatic figure—is carried to very high levels. (Like the *siga-siga* of earlier Filipinos.)

In Italy (the Philippines) much changed on the surface but little in the depths. The country is crammed with thwarted souls, frustrated over government incompetence, legal chaos, crammed cities and lack of dynamism. Our sun is setting in installments. It's festive and flamboyant, but it's still a sunset.

* * *

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Not the war

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

WHY DID THE KAPATIRAN CANDIDATES lose and Ed Panlilio win? Didn't they both present a storyline of Good vs. Evil?

Well, the Kapatiran candidates themselves have very good explanations for it. "There was really a problem with awareness," says Martin Bautista. "Very people knew about us."

Jess Paredes puts it this way: "There was so much focus on the advocacy and we forgot about the nitty-gritty of a political campaign .... We had a good product with a bad packaging." Paredes adds that many voters actually thought Kapatiran was a party-list group. "That's how bad the awareness problem was."

The last I know for a fact. Days before the elections, some friends of mine were astonished to learn that Kapatiran was not a party-list group but a regular political party with its candidates running for senator. The name "Kapatiran," otherwise an excellent one for a party, might have added to the confusion. It sounds not unlike Buhay or Akbayan or Alagad. To compound the problem, Kapatiran had only three candidates, bolstering the impression it was a party-list group.

Nandy Pacheco kept repeating that Kapatiran was a regular party, not a party-list group, but that was where lack of media exposure hurt. Kapatiran did land in the newspapers and in the news of some networks in the beginning, but they slowly disappeared from them as their novelty wore off, or as the media expenditures of the other candidates kicked in.

But there is a deeper explanation for it. One that should clarify what I mean when I say that the Good can't just be an alternative program or agenda, or even an alternative individual or individuals; it has to be a moral imperative, or a choice with enormous symbolic power. It can't just be something that appeals to the head, it has to be something that seizes the heart. It can't just be something that moves the body, it has to be something that stirs the soul.

Cory was like that when she fought Marcos. She resonated with that symbolic, larger-than-life, spiritual power, helped in no small way by the mythic image of a Joan of Arc or its equivalent in the messiah-like figures of local movies (which Erap would later exploit). She was more than an alternative to Marcos, she was the opposite of Marcos. She more than just augured well for a better order, she radiated hope, transcendence, salvation. She was more than a candidate, she was all the roles of Erap and FPJ in the movies, reincarnated in life.

As I've said in several columns in the past, what gave a glimpse of that awesome power was the night Cory spoke at her *miting de avance* during the "snap elections." All the radio sets in one part of Quezon Avenue rang with her voice, and even the women of the night and various denizens of the flesh trade there froze in their tracks as though struck by light like Paul on his way to Tarsus. There was nothing intrinsically charismatic about the voice, it sounded like a monotone. A far cry from the bombast of Marcos, accompanied by Vangelis' "Chariots of Fire" (poor Vangelis, I would never associate his composition with anything else), that had been blaring out of those same radio sets hours before. But for all that, that voice might have been Joshua's trumpets themselves. That is mythic power. That is Good.

Being a priest or being pious is irrelevant. It is a spiritual force, not a religious one. Cory had it, the groups that fought Erap had it (made so by the impeachment trial, the greatest movie ever made in the Philippines), Panlilio had it. Kapatiran did not.

The problem goes beyond packaging. It's what lies inside the package itself. Even if Kapatiran had managed to muster the resources and produced ads, I don't know that it would have fared substantially better. "There was too much focus on the advocacy," as Paredes points out. True, but the advocacy itself targeted only the head, not the heart.

Pacheco himself would harp on the fact that Kapatiran is the only party in this country that is resolutely anti-*trapo*. In fact, it is the only real party in this country, apart from the Communist Party, one where the individual member is subservient to the party's principles and not the other way around. Kapatiran even managed to publish its platform in some newspapers and distribute leaflets explaining it.

That is all very well as far as public discourse goes. But it does not win votes. That is so not because the Filipino voter is dumb, though you can always argue for it; it is so because the Filipino voter needs to be inspired. That is so not because the Filipino voter cannot make a rational choice, it is so because the Filipino, voter or otherwise, needs not just to know that something is right but to feel that it is right.

I did think Bautista's and Paredes' personal histories held tremendous potential there. Bautista has not made a compromise: He has not turned from doctor to nurse to be able to work in America, and he has not applied for a green card in all his 17 years there. And to top it all, he does outreach work for the poorest of the poor in this country, who are to be found in the former *sacada* lands. Paredes on the other hand resigned his post as head of the monitoring committee on the VFA after Lance Cpl. Daniel Smith was sprung out of a jail cell in Makati. They do not just spout anti-*trapo* sentiments, they live anti-*trapo* lives. They are not just alternatives to *trapo*, they are the opposite of *trapo*.

Alas, that was never "packaged."

But for all this, it's a great beginning for Kapatiran, the first step in a journey of a thousand miles. One that is likely to get these currently lonely travelers a legion of traveling companions over the next few years, or even months. My heart goes to them.

They may have lost a battle, but they may yet win the war.

Farewell to Johnny and Menchi

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

TOWARD THE END OF THE CAMPAIGN, I JOINED the motorcade of Fr. Ed Panlilio in Betis-Guagua, if only to get a feel of this new phenomenon in Philippine politics. It snaked slowly through small narrow streets where townsfolk waited for him under the hot sun, holding up "Among Ed" placards they had made. After about two hours, I decided to break off and wait for his party at the St. James Parish Church, where he had served as parish priest before throwing his hat into Pampanga's political ring. At a small store in front of the church, I struck up a conversation with an elderly masseuse, asking her what she thought of Among Ed. She said that he is truly a good man and no one who goes to the rectory to ask his help would come out empty-handed.

* * *

Now that he has won, the question on everyone's mind is, would he be able to deliver according to the Kapampangans' high expectations? Fr. Joaquin Bernas was quoted asking why it had to take a priest to defeat the leading politicians of Pampanga. The reason is that the people obviously think that a man of God won't be corrupted. Looking at and listening to Among Ed, who exudes a certain saintly aura, I thought, perhaps, he won't be, but can he control those around him?

* * *

In Pampanga, he told me he'd put together the best team possible to govern the province. Everyone hopes the team can deliver, for now it's no longer a question of just doling out help from the rectory, it's about running a high-profile province efficiently and well, delivering badly needed services and keeping corruption at bay. Going for the 52-year-old Among Ed is his 27 years in the priesthood in Pampanga, which steeped him in social action issues. The entire Filipino people wish him success.

* * *

Last Friday morning, Speaker Jose de Venecia flew by helicopter to Manila to host a luncheon at the Manila Hotel for departing Chinese Ambassador Li Jinjun. He lost no time to tell the honoree that he interrupted his wait for his proclamation in order to fly to Manila; so did a number of the reelected House members. JDV was not being hyperbolic either when he toasted Li as "the best of all the performing ambassadors of China in this country."

* * *

JDV pointed out the large Chinese ventures in RP, the most substantial being the rebuilding of Luzon's railroad backbone. He also said that trade and investments between the two countries have expanded to "unprecedented levels." In fact, he noted that of all the Asean states, RP enjoys the fastest-growing trade with China. In turn, Li toasted the "golden age" of China-RP relations as moving on to "new heights," something that JDV, "who's like an elder brother of mine," helped build—to a large extent.

Indeed, many developments happened during the term of this Chinese envoy: the opening of a new consulate in Cebu; and the resolution, albeit temporary, of the conflicting claims of Beijing, Manila and Hanoi to islets in the South China Sea, in favor of peaceful joint explorations. But to me, his most significant contribution is China's financing, with soft loans, of the railways of Northern Luzon and Southern Luzon. It's a fact that no country can industrialize without a modern railway system.

* * *

Two good friends recently left us for the Great Beyond. Former Philippine Constabulary Brig. Gen. Juanito Aquias (ret.), my husband's "mistah" in PMA Class '61, died last Sunday after a long bout with cancer. Johnny was the live wire and *raconteur non-pareil* of his class, with an unsinkable sense of humor. He was nearly always the focal point at class gatherings, as he recounted endless anecdotes about well-known personalities, which kept everyone in stitches. But what was most remarkable about Johnny, apart from his kind heart, was the heroic and courageous way he fought the Big C. In his zest for life, he exhausted all remedies wherever they could be found; after the doctors in the United States gave up on him, he tried a still relatively unknown treatment in Hong Kong for about two years. But in between bouts, he went about his business casually, so that many never guessed how serious his condition was. To his widow, my dear friend Cecile Yandoc Aquias and the family, our heartfelt condolences. Class '61 will miss him so.

* * *

Minerva "Menchi" P. Franco, the longtime executive director of Design Center of the Philippines, passed away last May 1 after a long bout with cancer, too. Menchi, 64, left bereaved a whole generation of colleagues and followers in the allied disciplines of architecture, design and craft. As INQUIRER columnist Augusto Villalon wrote in "Pride of Place," Menchi was "part of a band of young graduates who saw great promise in Philippine design and the brilliant, unappreciated heritage of traditional decorative arts in the Philippines, and its international potential in the hands of Filipino designers." Such was her dedication that long after most of that band had left to pursue other dreams, she stayed at Design Center, "bringing up," as Villalon put it, "the baby we entrusted to her into a strapping, self-confident and successful adult" in her characteristically low-key style. Even in death she remained low-key. Cremated the day after she died, her interment was, as her mother, former Araneta University Dean of Women Yolanda P. Franco, put it, "a small affair," just as she wanted it. Her three sisters and a brother sang her favorite songs and recited lines from her winning oratorical and declamation pieces—no eulogies, no wake, no fuss. Mommy Yoly said that Menchi, perhaps, wanted to spare her the strain and concern as she is now 87 years old. That's vintage Menchi—always low-key but full of love and consideration for the feelings of others.

Where have the piano makers gone?

HUMAN FACE

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

WHERE HAVE ALL THE PIANO MAKERS GONE? Gone with globalization every one.

That's my take on the vanished piano-making industry in the Philippines. Almost gone too are the craftsmen and artisans who built these great musical instruments that had brought music and liveliness to Philippine homes and concert halls.

But not entirely. Australia-based Filipino visual artist Alwin Reamillo, who comes from a family of piano makers, is back, trying to prove that the music from Philippine-made pianos need not die. Not if the few remaining piano builders could be brought back to old, abandoned workshops, and with their hands (some gnarled because of tricycle-driving), pick up the scattered pieces, strings, ivory keys, metal scraps and all, and put them together.

This is what Reamillo's art exhibit "Mang Emo Mag-himo Grand Piano Project" is doing. This exhibit is not Reamillo's alone: Collaborating with him are piano craftsmen Jaime Pastorfide, Sabas Rabino Jr. and Tranquilino Tosio Jr., all from the Reamillo family's closed-down piano factory that produced the Wittemberg pianos.

The exhibit's catchy name comes from the nickname of Reamillo's father Decimo, who was fondly called Mang Emo. "Mag-himo" is Visayan for "to make." Mang Emo, Reamillo says, learned the rudiments of piano-making by working for a piano company. Later, with his trained craftsmen, and with his brother and nephew as partners, he built a company that began with piano repair and restoration. They later went into fine pianos, some of which are in the Philamlife Auditorium, Miriam College and the Benedictine Sisters in Leyte.

The two-part, two-site commemorative visual installation is part of Reamillo's four-month Asialink Visual Arts Residency at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and Galleria Duemila. The exhibits present the documented development and restorative construction of an art case for an upright and a parlor grand piano.

In 2005, Reamillo came home from Australia to immerse himself in what was left of the family-owned factory that closed in the 1990s. He tracked down people, especially the craftsmen who had gone their separate ways. He found one tending a fishball stall in a slum area.

Reamillo flung open the gates of the old factory and rummaged through the rubble. What he found could have belonged to the dumpsite if not for the keen eyes of the craftsmen who saw in them music waiting to be heard. Cast iron parts, sounding boards, wood, patterns, and boxes of ivory keys lay strewn about.

But with determination, Reamillo was able to make the place hum again. The key: community values and the participation of everyone. These, Reamillo says, were values the late Mang Emo imparted to his workers. He was brother and fellow worker to every one.

The theme of migration is evident in the work of Reamillo who, as a Filipino migrant in Australia, has experienced what being swept away to a distant shore means. The sea and its creatures turn up in his mixed media work and on the casings of his pianos. The ghost of explorer Captain Cook lives in his ocean themes.

In Galleria Duemila (210 Loring St., Pasay City, Tel. No. 8319990), Part 2 of the exhibition presents an art case grand piano as a work in progress. A space in the gallery has been transformed into a workshop. A photo documentation has been mounted along with mixed-media paintings using the "transfer technique." The exhibition will close on May 31 at 6 p.m. with piano performances by various Filipino artists, Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Jonathan Coo (who will both play Rachmaninoff), Eira May Tardo (Bach), Harold Galang (Smetana), and Greg Zuniega (Beethoven).

A graduate of the National High School for the Arts in Makiling, Reamillo attended the University of the Philippines where he studied visual arts. He calls himself a cross-media artist who uses painting, sculpture, sound, installation and performance. His works have been part of several collaborative projects abroad.

So will the piano-making industry in the Philippines be resuscitated? Can finely crafted pianos compete in prices with factory assembly-line brand-name pianos from China or Japan? Maybe not.

Globalization, trade liberalization and all that have intruded into the fine art and soulful making of the finest of musical instruments. What have become of the piano makers, the piano tuners, the carvers, the metalworkers, the assemblers?

Have you seen the innards of a piano? It is a wondrous thing to see, a work of art in itself.

Reamillo muses: "While I have often perceived that old piano factory as a decayed and emptied shell, not dissimilar to old perceptions of the Philippines as a nation in crisis, I have come to realize that creative transformation and change is possible. I see great possibility in breathing new life into this emptied shell…"

* * *

Those of you who've followed the music path of internationally acclaimed conductor Helen Quach, who was here last April for her comeback concerts with the Manila Symphony Orchestra (MSO), can read about her journey to healing in the Sunday Inquirer Magazine, May 27.

And, music lovers, treat yourself to a night of Sir Edward William Elgar's romantic music at 7:30 p.m., Friday, June 1, at St. Cecilia's Hall of St. Scholastica's College.

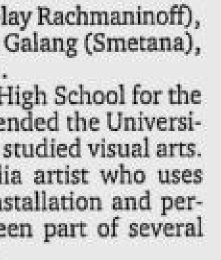
The MSO, conducted by Arturo Molina, and young American violinist and gifted composer William Harvey are the evening's treat. English romantic composer Elgar is known best for his orchestral work, particularly the "Enigma Variations" (which inspired the hit Rob Dougan track, "Clubbed to Death" in the soundtrack of the 1999 smash-hit "The Matrix"). The program will feature Sir Elgar's violin, orchestra and chamber music compositions "Chanson de Nuit, Op. 15, No. 1," "Salut d' Amour, Op. 12, " "Enigma Variations, Op. 36," and "Violin Concerto in b minor, Op. 61."

Elgar's 150th birth anniversary is on June 2, 2007.

* * *

Send feedback to cerespd@info.com.ph

Ceasefire?



THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

LET'S NOT FORGET THAT IN 2005 AND 2006, public opinion was for impeachment and against Charter change, but divided on other options. From 2005 to the present, public opinion has overwhelmingly been against the President, but disunited on what, if anything, to do about it. And so it all came to a head on election day, in a near-nationwide rejection of the President's senatorial slate and some of her preeminent local candidates.

On Oct. 26, 2006, I pointed out that the President, as her so-called "people's initiative" ran aground at the Supreme Court, might be headed for lame-duck status if she failed to prevent an election in 2007.

She failed—and her allies, too; though on Dec. 1, 2006 it seemed to me necessary to bear in mind Churchill's admonition to his countrymen upon the deliverance of the British Army from Dunkirk: "Wars are not won by evacuations." The hordes of Charter change advocates were driven from the field; there would remain other battles.

Not least within the President's own forces. The President's partisans tried to massacre Lakas; the massacre failed; and what Team Unity spokesman Tonypet Albano proclaimed, prior to the elections, a "juggernaut"—an idol on rollers crushing all opposition before it—turned out too creaky to guarantee instant victory.

In this latest battle (the election), the President's machinery and "command votes" proved, if not a complete mirage, then, so vastly overstated. This was my point last Monday—some of her people might still win, but it's taken so long; and having been accompanied by such obvious chicanery, it will be a Pyrrhic victory at best.

And so we can say, this early on, that the Palace has proven itself a victim of its own quackery. The administration might have won individual battles, but it's incapable of winning the war. Yet a Palace bristling with generals isn't one to fold its tents and negotiate a surrender—that much we know.

It's also true that the two factions that constitute her ruling coalition have maintained their hold on the House: indeed, the President claims she has, at least, not lost on all fronts. Again, so what if a rational mind would know a war of attrition can't be hers to win? The constitutional clock runs out for her in 2010, doesn't it?

But then why not smash the clock?

Can the President then, mount a fresh offensive, specifically, a new effort to achieve Charter change? Mounting such an offensive requires the use of the coalition that very nearly collapsed because of Kampi's cannibalizing of Lakas' ranks prior to the elections. But there is no greater balm for the antagonized ally than the soothing prospects of forestalling presidential and senatorial elections in 2010.

And so, once more, and ever more, unto the breach! Tennyson once wrote of the Light Brigade what might well be Lakas' and Kampi's political epitaph:

"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Someone had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.

As Pierre Bosquet said of the same ill-fated cavalry charge, "It is magnificent but it is not war." It was suicide for the Light Brigade; it would be verging on the suicidal for the nation.

Yet if the Palace could not see then, it will not see, not now; maybe never?

For this reason, Conrado de Quiros says it will get a lot worse before it will become better; he said it not out of love of confrontation for confrontation's sake: he said it as a rational person who loves this country, who does not want to prolong its agony, but who clearly sees that if the Palace won't see reason, it will have no qualms about doing a suicide charge—regardless of the collateral damage.

Two eminently rational minds have suggested how confrontation can be forestalled.

Randy David last Sunday said the way forward requires three steps: (1) Stop the attempt to cheat the senatorial results; (2) All the Comelec commissioners should resign and be replaced with credible people; (3) The President should tell the country she will withdraw from public life in 2010, or sooner, and thus hopefully begin a process of reform and healing.

Tony Abaya said last Tuesday that to forestall a public backlash against the administration, and a repressive counterstrike from the military and the police, the President should acknowledge she has lost the de facto referendum that was the May elections and devote herself to leaving a good legacy: this means foregoing any further efforts to adopt the parliamentary form of government.

So, is it time for a ceasefire? A conditional reprieve for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo? Is she a lame duck yet? She still has an army. And a police force. Even the lame can command from the rear. Which means, she can still borrow a line from that old Pearl Harbor-inspired song, "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition!"

So what's left but to recall the naval hero John Paul Jones? What did he tell the British when they bombarded his ship and demanded his surrender?

"I have not yet begun to fight."

The British commander had reduced Jone's ship to a hulk; he rammed the enemy's ship and captured it.

Rather than discuss a reprieve, it might be better for the President to be reminded of what a famous American revolutionary flag defiantly proclaimed.

"Don't tread on me." On the country.

* * *

MIGUEL Zubiri took exception to my Monday column. It saddens me to have offended a person whose personal qualities I esteem. Let me say this: his anger shows he cares about not only winning, but winning honorably. A timely assurance.

Life's curveballs

TOO MANY TIMES HAVE I BEEN ASKED, BY FOREIGNERS and fellow citizens alike, why Filipino professionals leave our country to work abroad.

On one occasion in Tokyo, a light dinner conversation took a more serious turn when my American friend brought that subject up. "Everywhere in the US," he said, "There are Filipino doctors, nurses and IT and business professionals like you. If you all go back to the Philippines, you could easily drive your economy to a boom," he said.

YOUNG BLOOD

Jennifer Galang

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

I was quick to argue. I am, after all, one of these professionals. "It's not like most of them have a choice," I said. "People leave because otherwise their families back home wouldn't have anything to eat."

"True, but not for you. Your families are well-off," he said, referring to me and another Filipino at the table, a lawyer who's also working here in Tokyo. I almost choked on my Kimchi. My Filipino friend rebutted, "The economics of our present situation is not that simple. If all the professionals return, you have to deal with the unemployment and the loss of remittances. Our economy, our people, just can't afford that right now."

The debate went on for a couple of minutes more and, as expected, ended on a hanging note. If I only knew the answer to our country's problems, I would have shut all the politicians back home up, and that would easily win me a Nobel Prize.

The interesting thing, though, is a few years ago I shared INQUIRER columnist Conrado de Quiros' fervent views about professionals leaving for work abroad. I lived a rather comfortable single life in Manila. As a CPA, I was paid enough to enjoy an apartment in Makati and a few occasional luxuries. I didn't have any reason to complain. I frowned upon the professionals who chose to leave (as opposed to those who had to leave for the dire need of a better income), for I thought life in Manila was quite livable. However, I gave up those views like someone would drop a hot potato when I received an offer to work abroad. I packed my bags without hesitation and left.

For most professionals, especially CPAs like me, I could have chosen not to leave. Clearly, in my case, it was not a question of needing a higher paying job. Nor was it a question of nationalism or lack thereof. I am here because of a desire for personal growth, to realize my potential as a young, skilled professional. This, I believe, is not essentially bad in itself, which is why I'm bothered that we, the "leavers" are branded to be the bad, unpatriotic youth.

On what basis are we Filipino professionals being criticized for working abroad? Will our going back to our own country be able to solve our economic problems? To tell you the truth, those questions are not even relevant to me anymore. I believe the more important question is, why should I be expected to live my entire life in the place I grew up in? Is there something fundamentally wrong with living and working outside your country?

I will not appeal for your empathy by saying that under my circumstances, what I'm doing is a sacrifice. It is not, and I might be the first one to admit that. On the contrary, I feel privileged for being given this excellent work opportunity.

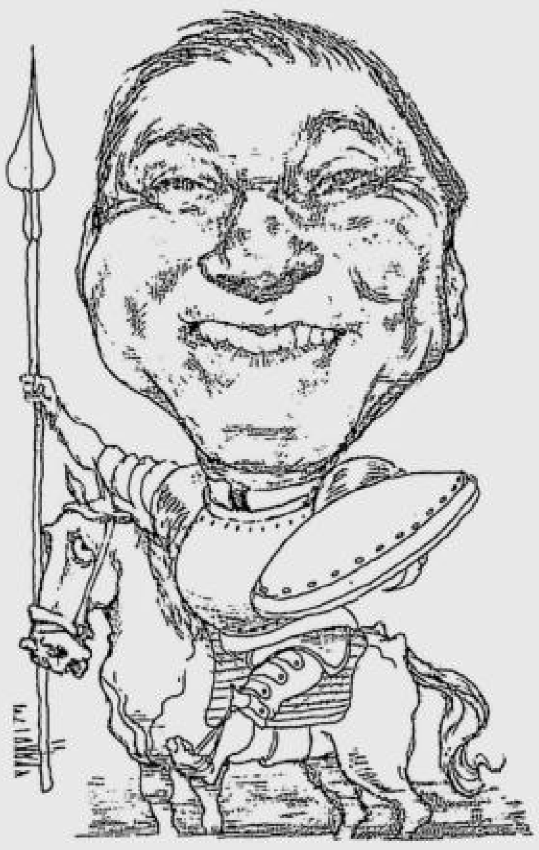
Some say that living away from your family is a sacrifice in itself. Yes, it could be tough at times, but isn't that true wherever you go? Life throws curveballs at you wherever you are. As a person who always sees a glass half-full, living independently for me is just a part of the appeal of living abroad.

The experience of stepping out of my comfort zone in Manila was nothing but exhilarating. I fend for myself, cook my own dinner and clean my own apartment. I have made friends from all over the globe, exposing me to new values and new realities. My office is a hodgepodge of cultures—American, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Turkish, British and so many others—that my accent is now all confused. My work is well appreciated in my job and that has made me confident enough to deal with clients from anywhere. I have countless choices I've never had before and numerous opportunities that I would never have had, if I had chosen to stay. I can choose to stay here or move to our office in another location, or I can take my MBA in the United States or in London. Even my overactive imagination as a kid never conjured that life could be like this. And all of these are because I am here.

This is not an encouragement for others to leave as well. I have my personal reasons, as I'm sure others have their own. My being here is essentially about living in another country, and not about leaving my country. I'm not here because I wanted to leave the Philippines. I'm here because I want to be here. Because I like being here. I believe that clearly distinguishes between being a sincere Filipino and an apathetic citizen. There is nothing fundamentally wrong with wanting to stay here. I have chosen to brave the other side of the fence with the purest of personal convictions, and without regret. I should not be condemned for doing so.

Jennifer Galang, 24, left for Tokyo in June 2006 to work in an auditing firm. She is 100-percent Filipino, and proud to be one.

IN THE NEWS



Fr. Ed Panlilio

Thank you, Kapampangans

THE INQUIRER HEADLINE LAST Saturday made me smile. ("Miracle in Pampanga," INQUIRER, 5/19/07) The feat of Fr. Ed Panlilio and the Kapampangans showed that there is hope for our country.

It is always said that the quality of our leaders today is a reflection of the kind of voters we are. But the events in Pampanga showed that given a clear choice, the people will vote for the candidates who truly deserve to win.

To the people of Pampanga, thank you for showing us the way. I hope that what you accomplished today will serve as an inspiration in the next elections.

—NINET EMLANO,
neemlano@yahoo.com

Congress, not Comelec, repealed Section 67 of BP 881

BONIFACIO A. OLVIDA, IN A LETTER (INQUIRER, 5/10/07), asked if the Commission on Elections can reverse an act of Congress. With due respect to retired Supreme Court Justice Isagani Cruz, please allow me to comment on the issue.

It appears that Comelec Resolution 7767 was promulgated pursuant to the Comelec's quasi-legislative powers. Under the doctrine of hierarchy of laws, Comelec Resolution 7787, being a mere subordinate legislation, cannot supersede or negate a law passed by Congress. But Sec. 38 of Comelec Resolution 7767 did not intend to reverse Sec. 67 of BP 881. It was Sec. 14 of RA 9009, an amendatory law enacted by Congress, that expressly repealed Sec. 67 of BP 881. Sec. 38 of Comelec Resolution 7767, therefore, merely seeks to implement Sec. 14 of RA 9006.

It is disappointing to note that Cruz also failed to mention in his column, even after his telephone conversation on the issue with election law expert Romulo Macalintal, the leading case of Fariñas vs Executive Secretary. (And this motivated me to write this letter.) In that case, the Supreme Court en banc upheld the constitutionality of Sec. 14 of RA 9006.

Lately, the DILG Cordillera Regional Office issued a clarification to the effect that any local elective official who has filed a certificate of candidacy for another office shall not be considered resigned from his office and, therefore, shall continue performing the functions of his office until the expiration of his term on June 30, 2007.

—H. JUSTINO F. MORALES,
42 Legarda Interior, Baguio City

LETTERS

Ban sample ballots

I TOTALLY AGREE WITH THE observation articulated in the letter "Election day turned into 'Litterbugs' Day' by candidates" (INQUIRER, 5/20/07) that the practice of distributing sample ballots should be stopped.

I have a better and more economical suggestion: Let Congress pass a law banning altogether the use of sample ballots and, instead, requiring voters to just come up with their own list of candidates when voting. This way, all polling places will be "litter-less" and our street cleaners will be very, very happy.

—JEREMIAS DECENA,
jeremiasdecena@yahoo.com

Tamano was only being logical

THIS IS WITH REGARD TO THE news item titled "TU, GO spokesmen clash over Chavit's No. 1 rank." (INQUIRER, 5/18/07) I think I am an apathetic citizen. I live in San Juan, an opposition bailiwick. I did not vote because I did not believe that my vote would be counted.

But when I read about Tonypet Albano and Adel Tamano exchanging barbs about the vote result in Maguindanao, I could not hold my peace. Why brand Tamano a racist when he was just saying that it was surprising that a Christian would top the elections in that province? He was not being a racist, he was being logical.

I think the reason Jamalul Kiram was chosen as a candidate of Team Unity was for him to represent Mindanao, his bailiwick, and to carry his teammates on to victory. Regionalism is a fact in Philippine politics. Filipinos support their own first before others.

Why would the people of Maguindanao choose someone else before their own son? The Maguindanao "vote" really defies reason, more so because the Maguindanaoans supposedly chose 11 others before their own. The vote suggests that Kiram was sacrificed to give some teammates a greater chance to get into the winning circle.

Also, what I cannot understand is that Albano would complain that Tamano, all throughout the campaign period, was calling the administration candidates and the party spokesman names. "He (Tamano) never addressed us by our names. He just called us *tuta ni* (lapdogs of) GMA (Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo). It's sacrilegious," Albano said. Is Albano saying that GMA is God?

—KIT CHING,
Metro Manila

Quezon's bias based on coffee-shop tales

IT IS NOT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND why Manuel L. Quezon III's May 21 column titled, "Machinery gave up the ghost" should take the wrong view on the still ongoing elections. The gentleman, though, must attempt to temper his biases lest we start to believe that he is part of a campaign to condition the mind of the electorate to discredit any legitimate win of any Team Unity senatorial candidate. Unless Quezon's allegations are substantiated, INQUIRER readers should be told that what he writes are mere figments of his fertile imagination and a disservice to the right of the people to be informed.

Quezon's ignorance of the efforts of the Team Zubiri campaign staff and thousands of volunteers all over the country leads him to make statements based on stories he probably heard in coffee shops.

Quezon should not take anything away from my team. We worked hard to get to where we are now in the canvass and the surveys conducted prior to the elections. In addition to the sorties organized by Team Unity, our team made use of all available time to visit as many public markets, and attend as many political rallies and town hall meetings as the days allowed. Quezon was never with us when we started at dawn and finished late in the evening, or in the wee hours of the morning even. He was not with us when we reached out to as many people as we possibly could, in as many motorcades as our resources allowed.

Quezon was not aware of all the strategies, both new and time-tested, employed by my team. He did not hear all seven versions of our radio ads released only to local radio stations. He didn't monitor the activities of my wife, Audrey, who made a big personal effort to make my presence felt even when I was not around.

For Quezon to suggest that Zubiri can only win through "last-minute miracles of a sinister sort" is tantamount to calling the INQUIRER-SWS survey (where Zubiri ranked 9th) a sham, the Pulse-Asia poll (where Zubiri landed 10th-18th) rigged, the dzRH results (where Zubiri is 10th) a lie, Namfrel's count (where Zubiri is bouncing between 10 and 13) a quack, and ABS-CBN's exit poll (which showed Zubiri in 8th-12th) a mere PR job.

We are ready to dialogue with Quezon if he so wishes.

—JUAN MIGUEL F. ZUBIRI,
G/F PetPlans Tower,
Edsa, Makati City

A real-life encounter with poor health service

WHOEVER WINS THE 12 SEATS IN THE SENatorial race should remember what they promised during the campaign and stand by their words—they should give health and education top priority. We know that these two concerns are being taken for granted by the present administration which is obsessed with debt-servicing.

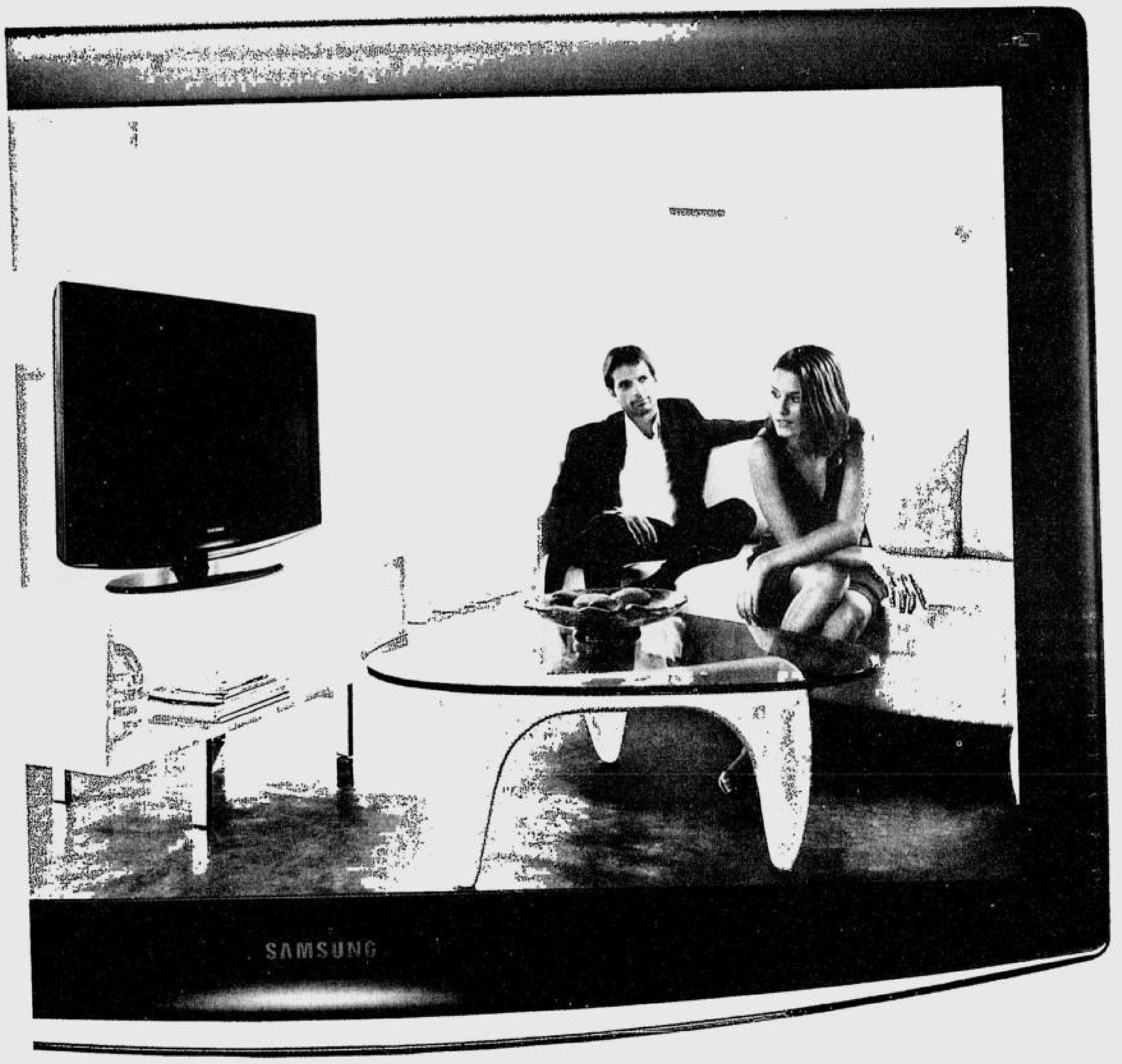
I was at the East Avenue Medical Center a few months ago and there I experienced firsthand what substandard health service is. EAMC is a government hospital and it may be charging for its services rates lower than those charged by private hospitals. But would this also mean it is offering inferior services?

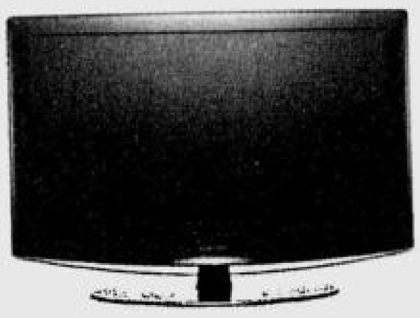
My sister gave birth in the hospital but none of her companions was allowed inside the building. The nurses told us that because there were so many patients, there were no available rooms, so the patients could not be transferred yet to the ward, and we had to sleep overnight at the building entrance. We would be called if the patient needed something like food and diaper.

After almost three days, my sister was finally transferred to the ward. There we saw the miserable conditions of other women who had just given birth. In another room, many of them had to make do with the floor, with only a mattress on their back, waiting for an available space in the ward.

This is just one story that makes for a telling denunciation of the wrong priorities of our government. The next batch of senators should do something about this.

—CATHERINE NANTA,
Lot 3 Blk 1, Prater Village,
Ampid, San Mateo, Rizal





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Canvass chair's collapse stops counting anew in Cebu town

By Jhunnex Napallacan
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—THE MUCH-DELAYED canvassing of election returns from Bogo town was again stopped yesterday when the special board of canvassers' (BoC) chair collapsed.

Task Force Hope-Visayas chief Senior Supt. Lani-O Nerez rushed Bohol election supervisor Veronico Petalcorin, the chair of the special BoC for Bogo town, to the Visayas Community Medical Center at around 10:15 a.m., in a police car.

Back to normal

Petalcorin was already fine and was walking without help when they arrived at the hospital, said Nerez, who heads the security team at the vicinity of the Comelec regional office on Osmeña Boulevard, Cebu City.

Nerez said Petalcorin was conscious and just asked for a massage on his hands while inside the police car.

Lionel Marco Castillano, Cebu provincial election supervisor, who also went to the hospital, said Petalcorin's blood pressure shot up but it was already normal as of noon.

Castillano said Petalcorin is already resting at the hospital, though there was no word yet how long he would stay at the hospital.

"It could just be an over-fatigue," Castillano said when asked for the cause of Petalcorin's illness.

Overtime work

Petalcorin and the two other BoC members, Negros Oriental acting election supervisor Eddie Aba and La Libertad election officer Roberto Remolano, worked overtime since Tuesday afternoon when the ballot boxes containing the ERs from Bogo were transferred from the Capitol to the Comelec regional office.

The new board took over the canvassing when the previous board decided to inhibit after they were threatened with a "citizen's arrest" and accused of engaging in electoral sabotage by the lawyers of fourth district congressional aspirant Benhur Salimbangon.

The Bogo canvassing will be the deciding factor in the fourth district congressional race between Salimbangon, a former provincial board member, and outgoing Bogo Mayor Celestino "Tining" Martinez III.

Petalcorin, after taking over the canvassing, declared that the new board would not allow any dilatory tactics and anyone who disrupts the proceedings would be arrested.

Because of Petalcorin's health problem, Comelec Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, commissioner in charge for Central and Western Visayas, appointed Aba as the new chair of the canvassing board.

In an interview over radio station dyLA, Borra said the board could continue even if there were only two members left.

The new canvassing board would, among others, have to deal with the alleged three missing election returns and protested 15 election returns because of lack of signatures, thumb marks and other minor problems.

Marines clash with gunmen preparing for special polls

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Marines raided a "holding area" of what soldiers said was an armed group that was likely being used by candidates and was being prepared for operations in special elections in Lanao del Sur.

The Marines clashed with the group in Akbar, Basilan early yesterday, a ranking military official said.

Brig. Gen. Ramiro Alivio, commander of the 1st Marine Brigade, said the government suffered no injuries.

But he could also not say whether or not there was any casualty on the side of the armed group during the 20-minute gunfight in Barangay Bato-bato, which started 5:25 a.m.

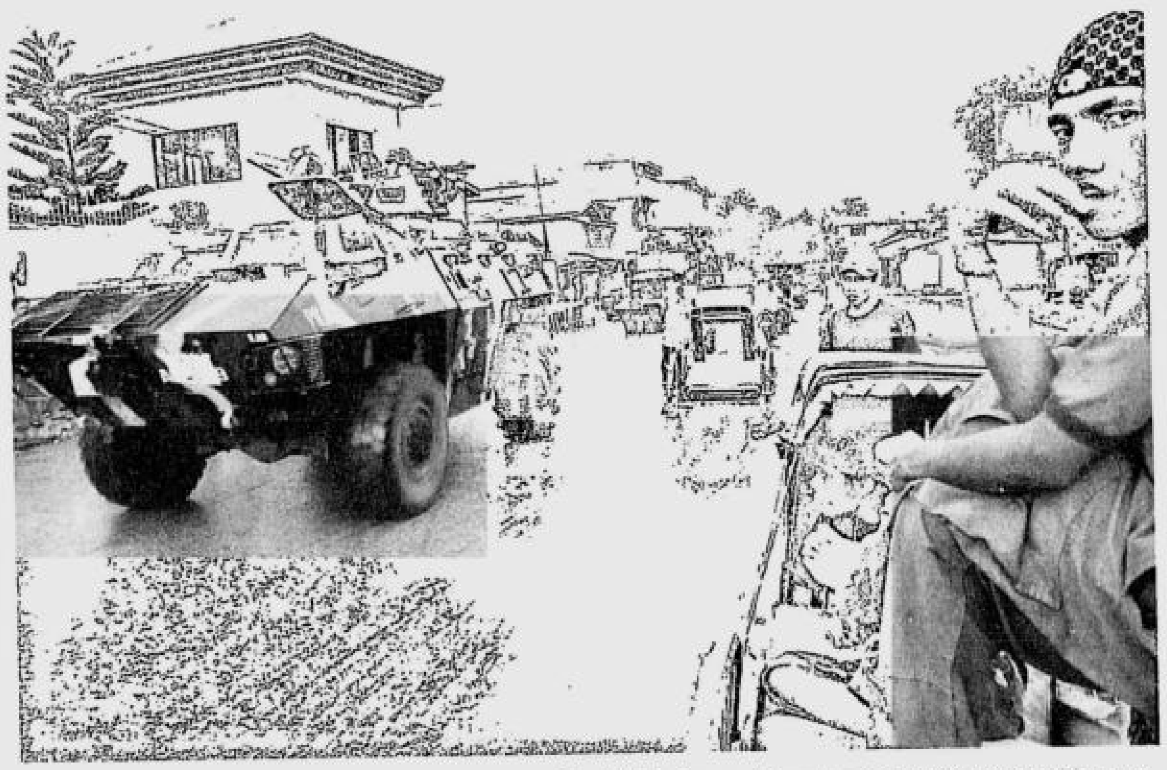
Alivio said soldiers from the 8th Marine Battalion Landing Team, led by Col. Felix Almadrones, recovered a 50-cal. machine gun and various types of ammunition.

"Their presence in the area has something to do with politics. We suspect they were sent there to harass voters in connection with the upcoming special elections in Akbar," Alivio said.

Violence

The elections in some polling areas in Akbar were suspended when followers of mayoralty candidates Hajaron Jamiri and Alih Salih, a relative of Basilan Gov. Wahab Akbar, clashed inside a polling center as balloting was about to take place on May 14.

A follower of Jamiri died in the gunfight while several others were injured.



A FAMILIAR sight on Jolo Island, an Army armored vehicle brings soldiers to guard voting in troublesome areas.
AL JACINTO/CONTRIBUTOR

Similarly, some areas of Sumisip town failed to conduct elections because of violence during the balloting last week.

The Commission on Elections has set the special elections in at least 10 polling centers in Akbar and in Sumisip town for May 26.

Alivio also said the group that clashed with the Marines could also be behind Monday night's grenade explosions inside the Lamitan Elementary School in Lamitan City, which is about 30 km from Akbar.

The explosions, which injured three followers of a Sumisip town politician, occurred during canvassing of votes from areas of Sumisip, where elections took place on May 14.

No identities

Senior Supt. Salik Macapantar, Basilan police chief, said those wounded were Ben Idris 40, Nasser Asarul, 32 and Jalil Paris, 35, all of Sumisip town.

The grenades were fired from a launcher, the Army said.

Macapantar said the perpetrators positioned themselves at the Rizal Pilot Elementary School, which is about 100 meters from the Lamitan Central School.

Although police were certain the attack was election-related, Macapantar said they still have yet to determine the identities of the perpetrators.

"As of now we do not know who fired the grenade launchers," he said.

Lamitan City Mayor Roderick Furigay told the INQUIRER that they have been opposing the Comelec decision to hold the Sumisip canvass in the city.

"For security reasons we also expressed our opposition to the canvassing of votes from the towns of Tuburan, Akbar and Muhammad Adjul here," he said.

Furigay said the mere sight of armed followers of politicians from these towns have alarmed residents of Lamitan.

Macapantar said the Comelec is studying the transfer of the canvassing from Lamitan to Isabela City.

Father's killers

Politicians resort to hiring gunmen for protection and to intimidate opponents.

In Davao del Sur, a member of the Sarmiento family asked authorities to arrest Rep. Claude Bautista and his escorts for allegedly killing his father and brother on May 16.

Edgar Sarmiento said they have two witnesses, who identified Representative Bautista, gubernatorial candidate of the Nationalist People's Coalition (NPC) in Davao del Sur, as the one who shot and killed his father, Isidro Sarmiento.

The elder Sarmiento was a Lakas candidate for the mayoralty race in Malita town but he lost to Gov. Benjamin Bautista Jr., Representative Bautista's brother.

Edgar said Representative Bautista's bodyguards shot and killed his brother, Danilo, who was a candidate for the provincial board.

Representative Bautista had said his bodyguards shot the Sarmientos after Isidro opened fire.

One of his bodyguards, he said, was hit in the leg.

He said his bodyguards only defended him.

Edgar said witnesses have belied Representative Bautista's statement.

"A lot of people have seen Claude himself fire a pistol then his bodyguards followed suit," he said.

He said the witnesses saw the shooting.

Representative Bautista said he went to the Sarmiento house to verify reports that Danilo brought home certificates of canvass "secretly" given by Comelec personnel.

He said he was talking to Danilo when the elder Sarmiento, who was apparently drunk at the time, came out of the house and shot him.

One of his bodyguards was hit instead after he allegedly pushed him away.

"My other bodyguards responded," Representative Bautista said. *Julie Alipala with reports by Eldie Aguirre and Orlando Dinoy, Inquirer Mindanao*

Wife of slain vice gov Kalinga's first woman gov

TABUK, KALINGA—THE WIFE of slain Vice Gov. Rommel Diasen on Tuesday was proclaimed as the new governor of Kalinga.

Floydelia Diasen, 54, former vice chair of the health and science institute of the Kalinga Agricultural State College, will become the first woman governor of Kalinga since 1995 when the province was separated from Apayao.

She beat Rep. Laurence Wacnang and lawyer Warren Luyaben in the race.

Diasen, a replacement candidate, said the sympathy votes generated by the April 7 murder of her husband helped her win the top elective post in the province.

"This is a victory for the people of Kalinga. Their call for change of leadership and advocacy against election fraud has worked for us," she said.

Diasen received 52,897 votes while Wacnang got 18,721 votes. Luyaben, president of Integrated Bar of the Philippines in Kalinga, received 441 votes.

Easing tension

The count did not include votes from Tinglayan town, which have yet to be canvassed.

The provincial board of canvassers (PBOC), chaired by lawyer Ricardo Lampac, proclaimed Diasen to ease the tension among supporters of local candidates who started massing up in front of the provincial capitol.

The PBOC said the votes from Tinglayan, with 9,447 voters, would not affect the result in the gubernatorial race.

Efraim Lassam, Wacnang's lawyer, said the lawmaker had sent a congratulatory message to Diasen to ease the tension in the province.

"The people have spoken. Let us prove to them that we are worthy of this mandate," said Diasen.

The race for the lone congressional district seat of Kalinga, however, has yet to be concluded because votes from Tinglayan would decide the eventual winner.

Abra count

Leading the race were Manuel Agyao, who received 22,840 votes, and James Bejarin, son-in-law of Wacnang, who got 18,975 votes. Other candidates were former Gov. Macario Duguiang (17,777 votes), Danzel Langkit (9,274) and Joseph Delson (5,504).

In Baguio City, Armando Velasco, Commission on Elections director in Cordillera, said the canvass of election returns in three remaining precincts of Tineg, Abra, would proceed today (Thursday, May 24).

The canvass was delayed when a gunman shot the wife of a candidate inside the canvassing area at the Holy Spirit Academy in Bangued, Abra, town last week.

Velasco said he would assume the chairmanship of the municipal board of canvassers (MBOC), after its members resigned.

"I spoke to them on Monday and the teachers told me they feared for their life [because] a gunman was able to penetrate heavy police security and shoot Brenda Crisologo [wife of reelectionist Tineg Mayor Edwin Crisologo]," he said.

"I could not even locate the municipal treasurer. Under the rules, several officials are tasked to take the treasurer's place [in the MBOC], including the municipal assessor and the municipal clerk of court," he said.

"Only when none of these officials can assume the task will my [election] lawyers take their place. They are already there waiting for my arrival," he said.

The members of the MBOC were counting Tineg ballots inside the fourth floor of the Holy Spirit Academy when the gunman entered and shot Brenda Crisologo after the board adjourned for lunch.

Police have not yet explained why the gunman managed to enter the canvassing area, Velasco said.

Abra candidates and election officials wanted to take the election documents to Metro Manila instead, but Velasco said delaying the canvass further would only escalate tension there.

Lawyer Elenita Tabangin, Abra election supervisor, said results from Tineg, with 2,982 registered voters, could decide the race for the lone congressional district between Gov. Vicente Valera and Lagayan Mayor Cecilia Luna.

La Union scam

In La Union, officials of the Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) party said the high number of votes that the party-list group Abono got in the recent elections was one of the key instances why they wanted the province investigated for what they claimed was massive fraud.

"Even if it is a newcomer in the party-list arena, Abono was voted by 70 percent of the voters in La Union," Michael Magsaysay, Kampi spokesperson in La Union, said in a press conference in Baguio City on Monday.

Magsaysay said the percentage of votes received by winning gubernatorial bet, Rep. Manuel Ortega, was similar to what Abono, a group representing farmers in Northern Luzon, got in the province.

The second nominee of Abono is Francisco Emmanuel Ortega, Manuel's son.

Bulacan woes

In Bulacan, former Gov. Roberto Pagdanganan on Wednesday filed a petition to stop the proclamation of Board Member Joselito Mendoza, brother of outgoing Gov. Josefina de la Cruz, as the winner in the gubernatorial race.

As of Wednesday, Pagdanganan, with 300,096 votes, was trailing Mendoza, who received 320,094 votes. Vice Gov. Aurelio Plamenco was third with 172,353 votes. *Villamor Visaya Jr., Vincent Cabreza, Frank Cimatu and Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Inquirer Northern Luzon, and Carmela Reyes, Inquirer Central Luzon*

2 cops charged with arson, murder for Batangas fire

POLICE FILED A MURDER CASE Wednesday against a police inspector and seven other suspects accused of setting fire to a school used as a voting center in last week's elections, killing three people trapped inside.

The killings, a day after the May 14 mid-term polls, are among more than 40 deaths attributed by police to election violence.

During a lineup of suspects Monday, a witness identified Insp. Roberto Marinda as one of the armed men who barged into the voting center at the Taysan elementary school in Batangas province, fired their guns, poured gasoline on ballot boxes and set the building on fire, said Geary Barias, head of the national police's investigation directorate.

"There is a positive identification here, enough to file a case against Marinda and the other suspects," he said. The additional suspects were not identified, and Marinda has denied the accusation.

Barias said investigators were looking into the possible involvement of a defeated mayoral candidate. He said they were checking reports that the suspects stayed in the candidate's house before the elections.

The victims included a teacher and a poll watcher who were trapped inside the burning school. A driver died of severe burns on Monday, police said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who has described the elections as "good, peaceful, free and fair" despite the violence, last week visited the torched school, which she renamed to honor the slain teacher.

Police had reported about 130 people were killed in intense electoral rivalries during the four-month campaign, but last week abruptly lowered the death toll, saying only 41 deaths were found to be politically motivated. They did not elaborate.

Also charged was SPO2 William Relos and six other unidentified men.

Barias said the charges would be upgraded to triple homicide once police receive a copy of the death certificate of Guillermo Malaluan, who died Monday night at the UST Hospital due to burns.

Teacher Nellie Banaag and poll watcher Leticia Ramos initially died in the fire.

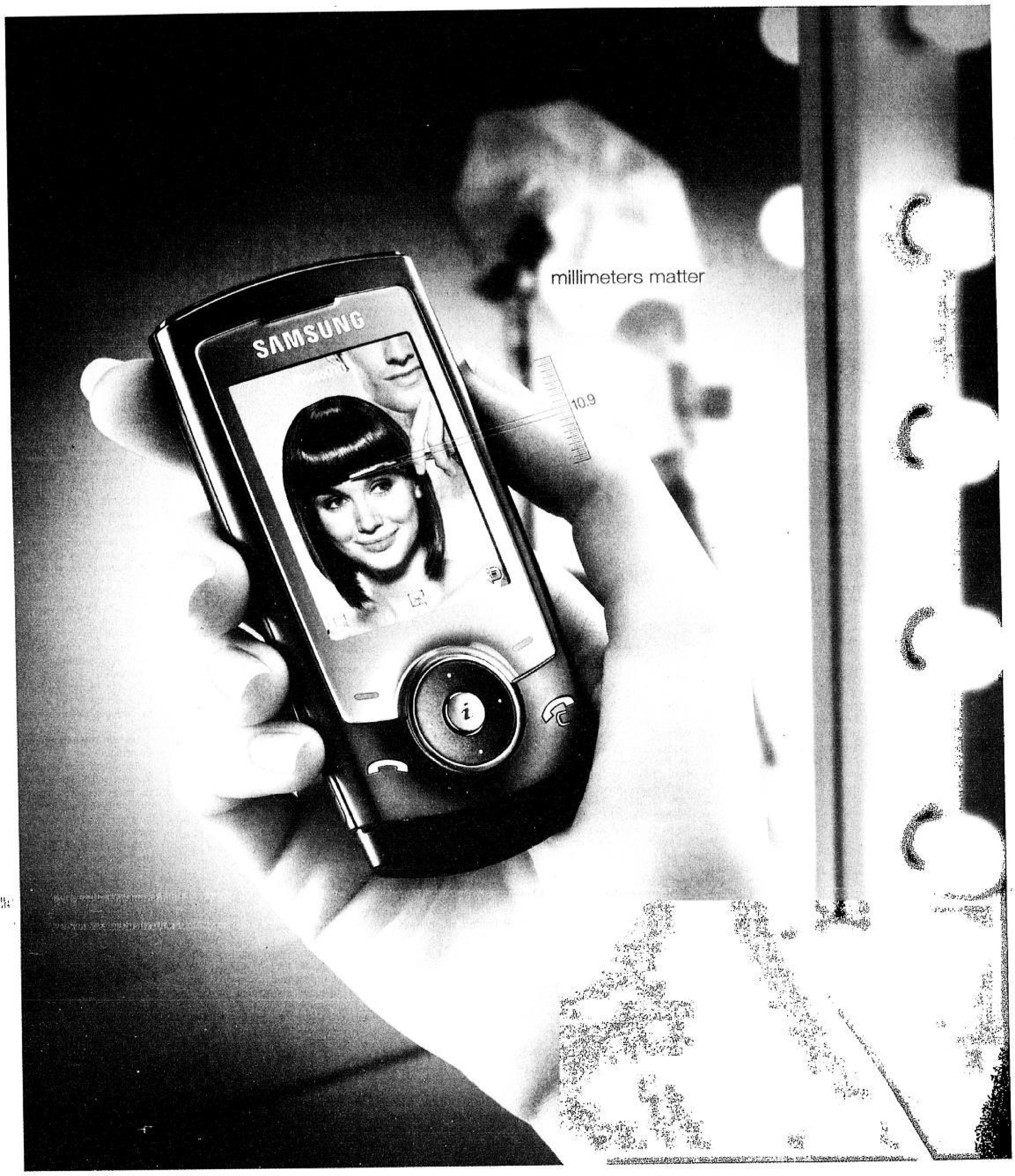
Witnesses have identified the two officers as part of a gang that torched the school.

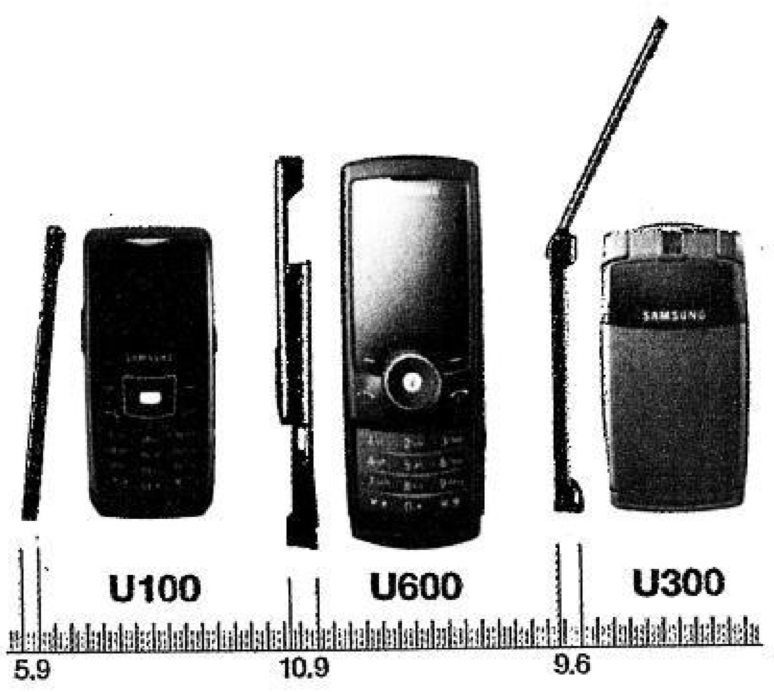
The two were kept in custody in Camp Crame but they were moved to the PNP's Region 4-A headquarters in Camp Vicente Lim in Laguna.

"We have a very strong case. We have sufficient evidence to pin them on probable cause. Besides being positively identified in the lineup, we also have eyewitness accounts," Barias said.

He said the two also face administrative charges. Taysan chief of police Chief Insp. Elpidio Ramirez and his deputy, Insp. Ruel dela Cruz, are also under custody in Camp Vicente Lim. They are also being investigated.

Barias also said PNP Region 4-A RSOG chief Supt. James Brilliantes is also being investigated. Brilliantes had already been relieved from his post. He had gone on official leave to pave the way for the investigation.





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INQUIRER Southern Luzon

Editor Jun Bandayrel
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Political foes share Chinese ancestry

By Juan Escandor Jr.
Naga City

FOR DECADES, CAMARINES SUR has been ruled by descendants of a single Chinese ancestry. The reign started in 1979 when Rep. Luis Robredo Villafuerte Sr., who is of Chinese ancestry, joined the Cabinet of the late strongman Ferdinand E. Marcos as trade minister.

Behind the continuing political conflict and rivalry that has been raging for more than 17 years now, Robredo and Villafuerte belonged to a common ancestry, only that it was divided by two marriages

After the assassination of former Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino Jr. in 1983, Villafuerte joined the opposition and later became a voice in the "revolutionary government" under Corazon Aquino.

After the Edsa I uprising in 1986, Villafuerte worked for the appointment of Jesse Robredo as chief of the Asian Development Bank-funded Bicol River Basin Development Project (BRBDP) and groomed him to occupy Naga's mayoral post.

Villafuerte, the son of Soledad Robredo who was a daughter of a Chinese migrant father named Lim Payco (baptized Serafin Robredo), had succeeded in propping up his nephew Jesse in 1988 and his son, Gov. Luis Raymund "LRay" Villafuerte Jr. in 2004.

Now a congressman, Villafuerte serves in the 10-town second district of Camarines Sur, that includes Naga where Robredo is the undefeated mayor. LRay is the governor.

In 1988, Robredo, 29, ran for mayor and made history as the youngest to hold the reins of the city government.

He defeated Ramon S. Roco, the younger brother of the late Sen. Raul S. Roco, by a small margin of votes.

When Robredo was in his first year as mayor, Villafuerte was appointed acting governor of the province.

In 1991, Robredo and Villafuerte parted ways and became bitter political rivals.

ROBREDO-VILLAFUERTE clan portrait: Jose Robredo, father of Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo, is standing second from left, in his 20s, with his cousin, Luis Robredo Villafuerte (sixth in the row), with other Villafuerte and Robredo siblings, aunts and an uncle of the Lim Payco bloodline in this undated photo of a family reunion.

PHOTO REPRODUCTION BY JUAN ESCANDOR JR.

Proxy political battle

Engaging Robredo, now 48, in proxy political battle, Villafuerte would field his own mayoral candidate to challenge him in five elections, including fielding his elder sister Luisa in 1998.

But the uncle always failed to crush the nephew, and the latter became the longest reigning mayor of Naga. Robredo's handpicked councilors have also swept the elections since 1991.

Last month, Robredo foresaw the unfavorable ruling of a Commission on Elections' division that would disqualify him.

The mayor said somebody from Comelec in Manila phoned him that a powerful figure was following up a petition for his disqualification that questioned his Filipino citizenship. The petition was filed by Jojo Villafuerte, his cousin and son of Villafuerte's elder brother Mariano Jr.

The move was largely attributed to Villafuerte, but he publicly denied such attribution.

Robredo was tormented by disqualification cases filed at the Comelec in the election years of 1998, 2001, 2004 and 2007.

A recipient of the 2000 Ramon Magsaysay Award for Public Service, Robredo was on the brink of being unseated after the Comelec's First Division acted on the citizenship issue, which was dismissed earlier by the Comelec en banc and the Supreme Court.

On the basis of the decision of Commissioners Romeo Brawner and Nicodemo Ferrer, the division served him a "quo warranto" on May 3 that disqualified him from the race because he was deemed a Chinese citizen.

A third member of the division, Commissioner Resurreccion Borra, dissented, however.

A motion for reconsideration has been filed that stalled the move to disqualify Robredo from the electoral race and government service.

Common ancestry

But behind the continuing political conflict and rivalry that has been raging for more than 17 years now, Robredo and Villafuerte belonged to a common ancestry, only that it was divided by two marriages.

The great grand patriarch Lim Payco, with his young son Lim Teng (Robredo's grandfather) from his first wife, whom they left in China, arrived in Manila toward the end of the 19th century. As a boy, Lim Teng was tutored by Spanish friars.

Lim Payco was baptized as Serafin and his son Lim Teng as Juan, and they were given the surname Robredo.

While nothing could be remembered about Lim Teng's mother, his father took a second wife named Josefa de la Trinidad, a widow.

Josefa bore four children, Soledad (Villafuerte's mother), Jose, Juan II, and Serafina who became Juan's (Lim Teng) half-brothers and half-sisters.

They were all surnamed Robredo with their Chinese name sometimes attached to their Filipino name. All were educated under the American school system.

Juan Lim Robredo acquired proficiency in three more languages—Filipino, Spanish and English—that qualified him to take on white-collar jobs.

At 21, Juan married Luisa Chan, a Philippine-born Chinese, and from their union were born six children—Serafin, Adelina, Juanito, Josefina, Jose (Robredo's father), and Juanita.

Both Serafin and Adelina died young due to illness, while Juanito, along with their mother Luisa, died during an attack by the Japanese soldiers while in hiding in Sipocot, Camarines Sur.

It was at this time that young Jose (Robredo's father) was wounded by a bullet in the stomach but survived through the help of friends and foot doctors who came to his aid.

Before the war, Luisa operated a grocery store while Juan worked as a court interpreter. Endowed with industry common among Chinese migrants, Juan moonlighted as a commercial photographer by putting up his own studio.

Later, he and half-sister Soledad (Villafuerte's mother) applied and were accepted as teachers at an Anglo Chinese School in Naga, where Soledad met her future husband, coteacher Mariano Villafuerte, at the same Chinese school.

Today, only two of Juan Lim Robredo's six children are alive—Jose Robredo Sr. (Jesse's father), blind and suffering from a degenerative ailment in the eyes, and Juanita Robredo Hao Chin, disabled by Alzheimer's disease.

The Villafuertes

Mariano Villafuerte (the congressman's father), a fine orator and speaker, was to become a congressman and later governor of Camarines Sur when the Japanese forces invaded the Philippines.

War-time Governor Villafuerte and his wife Soledad, with their eldest son Jose, died in the hands of vengeful guerrillas as the Americans were advancing to free the Philippines from the fleeing Japanese soldiers.

Governor Villafuerte's body was desecrated and decapitated and his head placed in a jar and then displayed in the plaza, according to old folks in Naga.

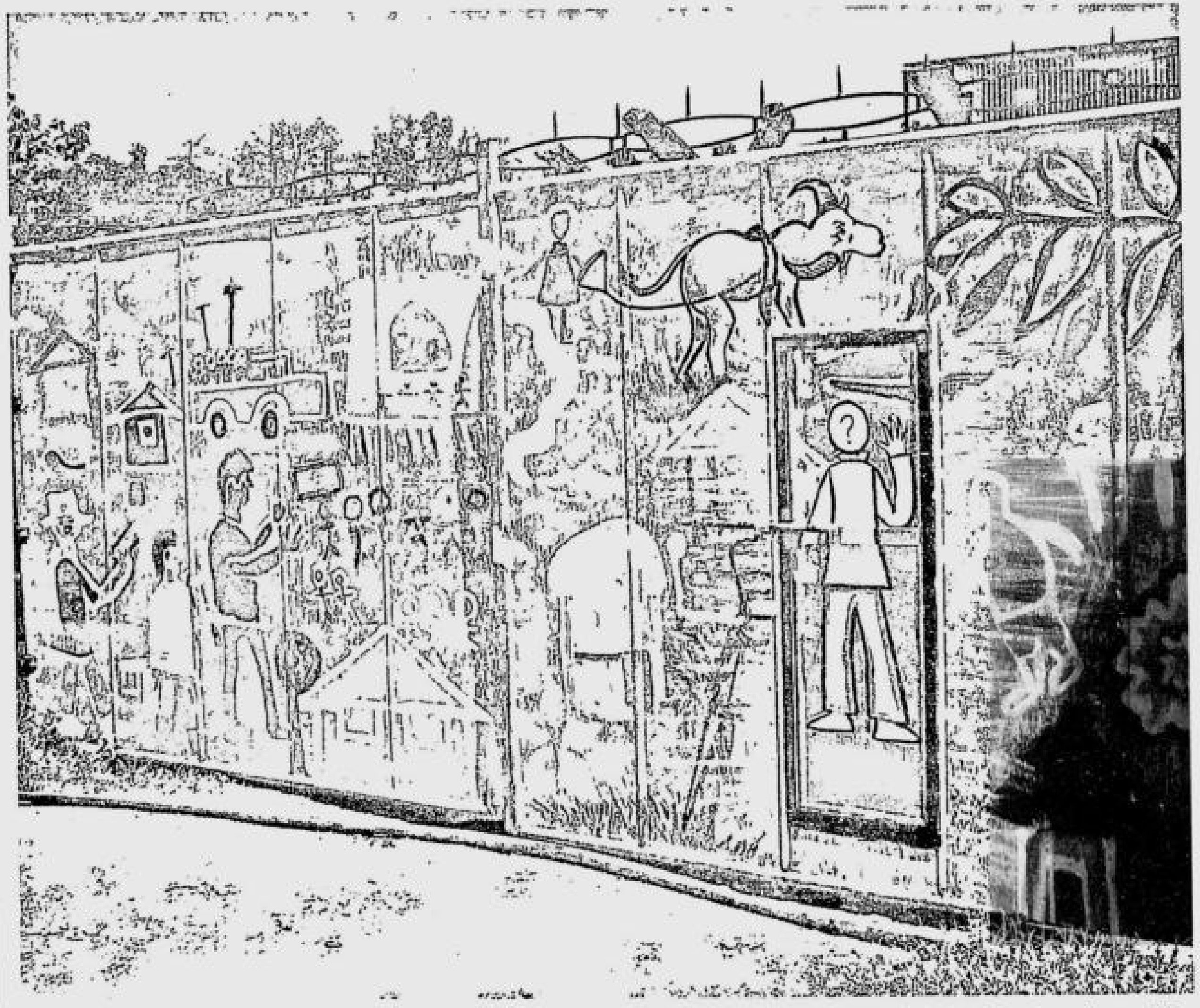
The couple left behind six young children—Pura, Fe, Mariano Jr., Carmen, Luis (the congressman) and Lina. Luis was to become a political leader while his brothers and sisters became successful professionals.

After the war, Jose married Marcelina Manalastas from Navotas, which was then part of Rizal. They built a house in Tabuco, a village across the river town of Naga.

They had five children—Jocelyn, Jose Jr., Jesse (the mayor), Jeanne, and Josephine.

(The ancestry part of this article was sourced from Jose Robredo Sr., 83, father of Naga City Mayor Jesse Robredo, whom the author interviewed at their ancestral house in Barangay Tabuco, Naga.)

Makiling scholars educate Mangyan voters through art workshop



A GATE mural depicts the bad experiences of Mangyan people during election time and their vision for a better life in Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro.

MADONNA VIROLA

By Madonna Virola
Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro

THE MURAL SPRINGS TO life in vivid colors of blue, red, green, yellow and gray from a two-leaf steel gate measuring three meters by six meters in Mamburao, Occidental Mindoro.

One leaf shows a man offering money to a group of villagers, another wielding a gun, nails, people being ferried by a vehicle and being herded in a place. The drawing depicted how politicians engage in broken promises and vote-buying, used armed goons to intimidate villagers, and herded voters into huts known as the "*pala-pala*" where they were fed and held like prisoners for days to ensure their votes.

On the mural's other half was a villager tilling the land, plentiful harvest of crops, a decent home, a properly dressed man, and food on the table. These represented a vision of a better life where everyone could work amid lush greenery and reap an abundant harvest without the politicians' interference.

The mural is a product of a voters' education program, Mangyan-style.

Makiling school

Last month, a group of scholars and alumni of the Philippine High School for the Arts in Los Baños, Laguna, facilitated a workshop consisting mainly of theater and visual arts activities, for the Mangyan people as part of an "art for voters' education" program.

"Our aim was to develop alternative forms of facilitating a workshop through the arts which we believe reflect life, society, ideas and visions as well," said Riza Jopson, one of the workshop organizers.

Rodolfo Plopinio, a businessman promoting Mangyan rights, offered the tall gates of his house in Barangay Tayamaan as "canvass" for the 40 participants.

The Mangyan "artists" communicated how they experienced harassment and abuse during the election period when their votes were deemed crucial to a candidate's victory.

'Giving back'

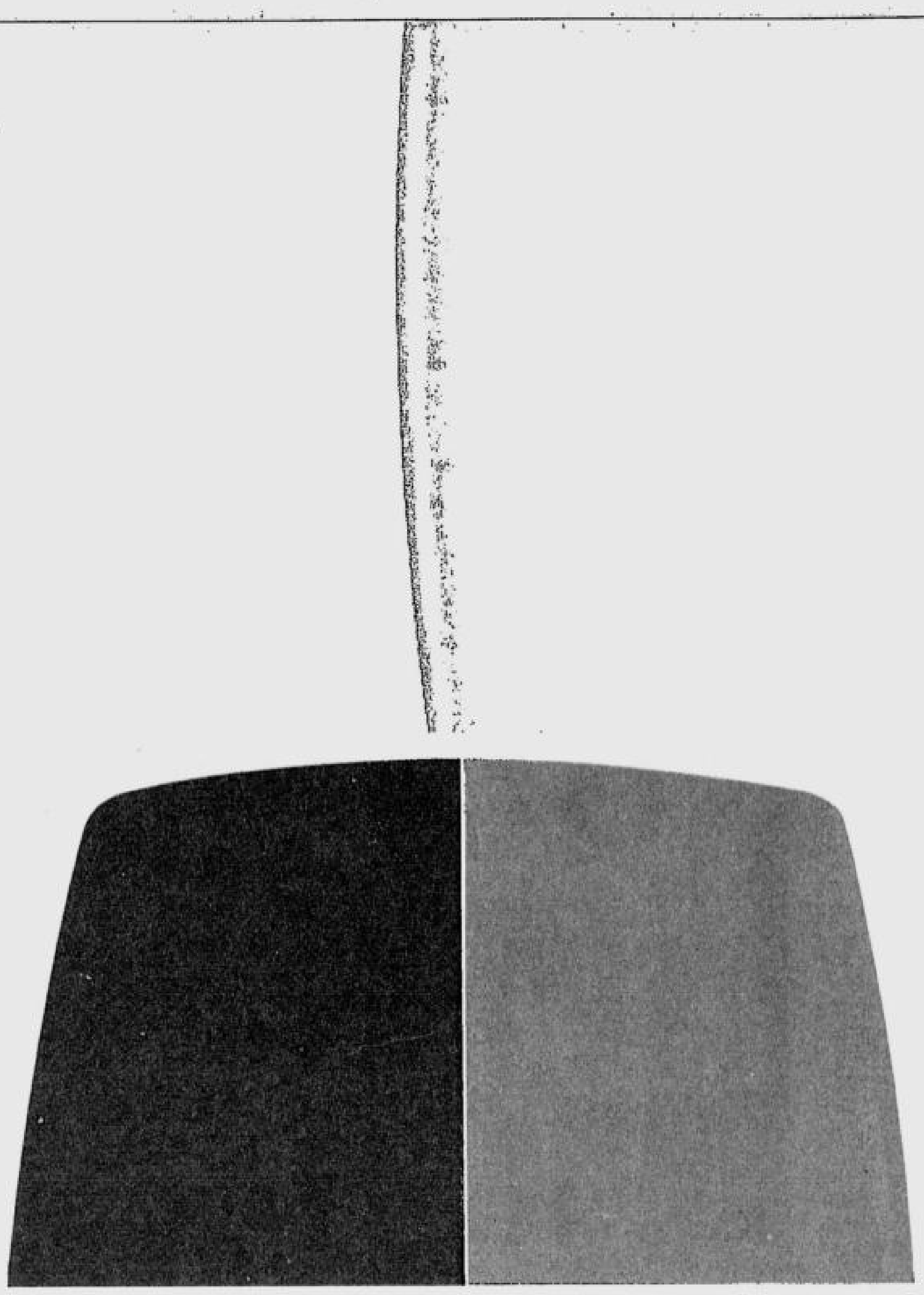
To the Makiling scholars, whose high school studies are subsidized by the government, providing a venue for the Mangyan to express themselves is a way of "giving back" to the disadvantaged members of the population.

"It is also an opportunity for us to integrate with the Mangyan community," said Jopson, who called the group of facilitators Ibarang from the mythic tribe who lives in Mt. Makiling in Laguna.

Plopinio said the mural-making became an alternative to the usual workshop-forum because participants were able to express themselves freely.

"Art became another language for the usually timid indigenous people who need not fear they would commit mistakes when expressing their sentiments," he said.

Fr. Anthony Tria, a Mangyan missionary, said the "Mangyan people are in the process of asserting their right to vote freely" and mural-making was therapeutic for them after experiencing different forms of abuse from politicians during election time.



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Jimenez children ask ex-solon to release stepmom

By Kristine L. Alave

THE CHILDREN OF FORMER CONGRESSman Mark Jimenez yesterday appealed to him to release their stepmother, Caroline Castañeda, from Silvercrest Foundation, a drug rehabilitation center owned by Jimenez's niece, in Parañaque City.

Virgilio and Marcel Crespo also told the INQUIRER that their father could still influence people because of his money and influence.

On Tuesday, Jimenez, whose real name is Mario Crespo, filed a complaint for estafa in the Makati prosecutor's office against his three children—Virgilio, Marcel and daughter Myla—and son-in-law Generoso Villanueva. Earlier, the four had also called for Caroline's release.

Jimenez had accused them of selling his stakes in Meridian Telekoms Inc. in 2004 without his approval.

"Niloloko niya ang sistema (He is fooling with the system). What would happen to small people when somebody like him does that to them? He can pick anyone on the street and say that there are charges against him," an angry Marcel said in an interview.

"Lahat ng tao, lahat kasama sa conspiracy (Everybody, they are all involved in a conspiracy). He's filing charges left and right," he added.

Jimenez earlier accused businessmen Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco and Ramon Ang of conspiring against him by pushing his wife, Caroline, to file abuse charges against him. She is also seeking a permanent protection order against him ***(See related story below)***.

Cojuangco and Ang, however, denied his allegation, saying they were not in the business of "meddling with domestic problems."

Jimenez's sons said the estafa charges filed against them by their father were made up. They noted that it was their father's way of shifting the focus away from their mother's plight.

Virgilio said the charges were "drummed up," adding that he barely knows anything about Meridian Telekoms. He added that they would not be surprised if their father would file another set of charges against them soon.

On Tuesday, Jimenez's three children and six stepchildren came out with a statement in several newspapers in which they asked government authorities to "act with dispatch in helping us recover custody of our mother and stepmother."

In their statement, they also refuted their father's allegation that Caroline was suffering from drug addiction and mental incompetence. Jimenez had said that he had Caroline committed because she was a drug addict.

"We also ask the instrumentalities of the state to act with dispatch in helping us recover custody of our mother and stepmother and bringing our father into hospital custody for proper medical care and rehabilitation that he is long overdue for. We are very concerned about his state of mind," the statement read.

Jimenez, meanwhile, said in a press conference that he has no plans to withdraw the cases he filed against his children even if they end up in jail.

"If I withdraw, I won't have credibility," Jimenez said in a forum at Club Filipino. "You have to start cleaning your own house first. If your house is questionable, how can you move forward?" he added.

Caroline was taken from her Makati condominium last week by eight men who reportedly forced her into a vehicle. A doctor later confirmed that he had seen her at the rehab center.

With Joseph John Raymundo

HERE COMES THE RAIN
Children cool off by bathing in a rain shower yesterday afternoon in Diliman, Quezon City

JOAN BONDOC

Gag order for lawyers of Mark Jimenez, wife

By Julie M. Aurelio

A TAGUIG REGIONAL TRIAL COURT JUDGE yesterday imposed a gag order on the lawyers of former Congressman Mark Jimenez and his wife, Caroline Castañeda, who had petitioned the court for a permanent protection order against her husband.

Judge Lorifel Lacap-Pahinma of Branch 69 warned the lawyers that she would cite for contempt anyone who speaks about the case to media.

Castañeda's half-sister, Rose Flaminiano, was also ordered not to comment on the case.

Reporters learned about the gag order when they asked Castañeda's lawyer, Lorna Kapunan, what happened during yesterday's hearing.

"The court has issued a gag order for the parties not to comment on the case. I cannot tell you what happened now," Kapunan said.

On the other hand, former Solicitor General Frank Chavez, who is representing Jimenez, quickly left the courthouse after the hearing.

In her petition for a permanent protection order, Castañeda accused her estranged husband, Jimenez, of physical and mental abuse.

Last week, while she was on her way to meet Kapunan, Castañeda was picked up by eight men in Makati and forced into a vehicle.

Flaminiano witnessed the incident and reported the matter to the police.

Castañeda was later discovered to be inside Silvercrest Foundation, a drug rehabilitation facility owned by Jimenez's niece.

In subsequent interviews, Jimenez claimed that his wife was a drug addict and a mentally unstable person who needed medical treatment.

But this was denied by Flaminiano.

After the disappearance of her sister, Flaminiano filed a petition for writ of habeas corpus to force Silvercrest and Jimenez to produce Castañeda.

"This is not a legal matter anymore, it's a matter of life and death. I plead with Jimenez to just release Carol," Kapunan said.

Virgilio Crespo, Jimenez's stepson, begged his father to have pity on Castañeda, who is under medication for a seizure disorder.

"Dad, *tama na*. Stop it. No one is believing you anymore. We love you but we cannot stand what you are doing," he said.

He had expressed concern that his stepmother's stay in Silvercrest might have prevented her from taking her prescribed medicines.

The next hearing for the permanent protection order was set at 2 p.m. Monday.

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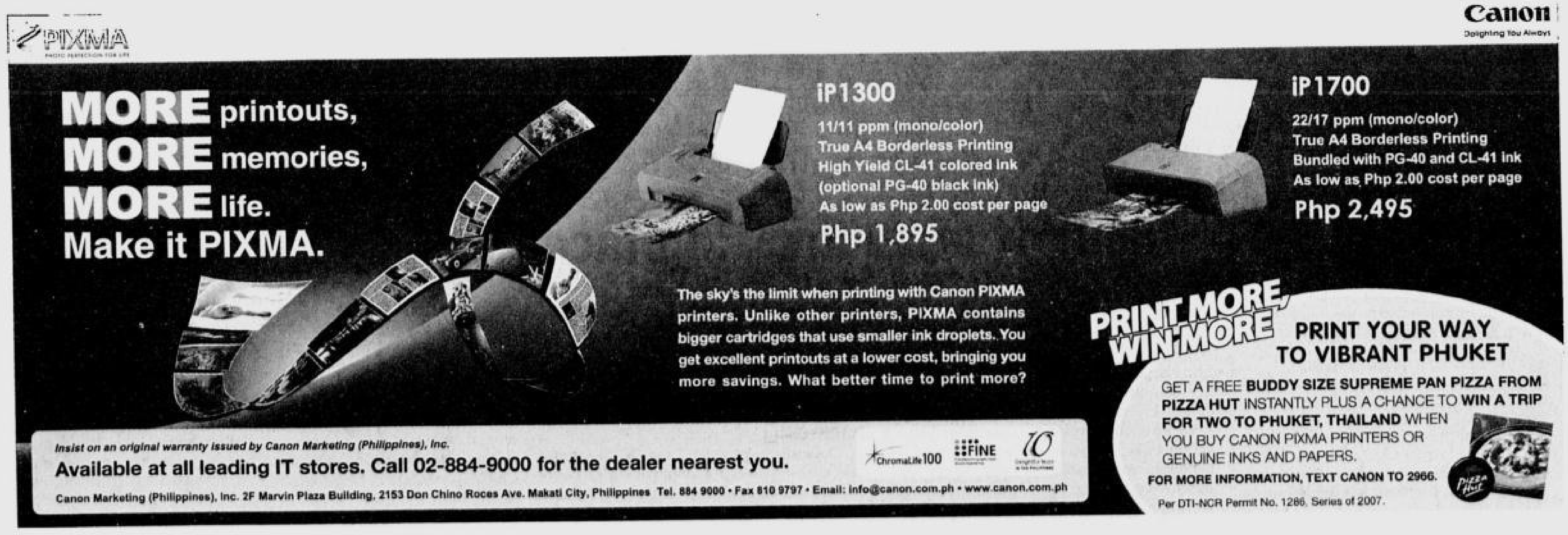

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Tinga named winner in Taguig mayoral race

By Julie M. Aurelio and John Edison Fulgencio

FREDDIE Tinga is congratulated by his supporters after his proclamation as Taguig City mayor. RAFFY LERMA

TAGUIG CITY MAYOR SIGFRIDO "Freddie" Tinga was declared the winner in the city's mayoral race yesterday after he beat his closest rival by a landslide.

Although the canvassing of election returns has yet to be completed, Board of Canvassers chair James Dell Demetria said it was impossible for candidate Marianito Miranda, who was in second place, to overtake Tinga's lead even if the remaining votes all turn out to be in Miranda's favor.

"It is already mathematically impossible for Miranda to take over Tinga's lead, given what is left of the ERs to be canvassed. This is the very reason why we already proclaimed him as the winner," Demetria told reporters.

At the time Tinga was proclaimed, the BOC had just finished tallying 1,056 out of 1,275 election returns. The results showed Tinga with 87,456 votes over Miranda's 34,227 votes.

The BOC, however, needs to finish canvassing the remaining ERs before it can proclaim the winners in the vice mayoral and congressional races. Competing for the vice mayoral post are incumbent Vice Mayor George Elias and former Vice Mayor Loida Labao-Alzona.

Three people are vying for the congressional seat in the first district: Councilor Arnel Cerafica, Jose Capco and Lani Cayetano. The electoral race for congressman of the second district is also a three-cornered fight, with Henry Duenas, Arturo Alit and Jett Reyes competing for the post.

On Tuesday morning, the Reyes's lawyers walked out of the proceedings after their motions for certain ERs to be excluded from the canvassing because of "formal defects" were denied by the BOC.

Formal defects refer to the absence of closing thumb marks or signatures.

"We will not participate anymore in these illegal proceedings," said Reyes's legal counsel, Frank Muñoz.

But the canvassing went on until Tinga was proclaimed early yesterday.

"They waived the right to be present. That's their choice. Their absence has no bearing on whether the proceedings will continue," Demetrio explained.

He added that ERs with formal defects are usually set aside and included in the canvassing in the end. "If we think the ER is authentic and has not been tampered with, we will just canvass it toward the end," the BOC chair said.

Tinga, standard bearer of the Kilusang Diwa ng Taguig party, will be serving his third and last term when he assumes office in July. He thanked residents for electing him a third time and vowed to continue his programs and services.

Bernabe seeks GMA's approval for fun center

By Allison W. Lopez

REELECTED PARAÑAQUE CITY MAYOR Florencio Bernabe Jr. said yesterday that he would push for Malacañang's approval of a "mini Las Vegas" to be built on 60 hectares of reclaimed land on Manila Bay.

Bernabe, who guested at the National Press Club weekly forum in Manila said the bill paving for the creation of the multibillion-dollar entertainment center was already passed by the Senate and just needed President Macapagal-Arroyo's approval. "I hope no one blocks this anymore. Casino operations have been legal for 23 years," he said.

The mayor said he would ask Ms Arroyo to endorse the project because she knows the "good impact" it would have on the economy through increased revenues.

The proposed casinos, bars, theme parks, shopping malls and hotels, according to Bernabe, would rake in—for the local government alone—an astounding P1 billion a year from real property taxes and business permits.

Chinese investors have already indicated interest in developing the "e-center," Bernabe added. He said Parañaque's 600,000 residents would benefit greatly from the 200,000 jobs to be created from the complex, which will also host the new Nayong Pilipino.

The mayor, however, warned that delays in the project, which was unveiled in 2001, could be costly.

"Singapore might get ahead of us if we don't build this center. Our target is really the Chinese market," he said.

The ambitious $20-billion project was said to be aiming for a slice of Asia's booming gambling industry.

In March, Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. chair and CEO Efraim Genuino said the Pagcor City complex would be built in three phases on 800 hectares of reclaimed land.

Genuino said he believed the project would not encounter opposition, even from the Catholic Church.

The one man who had Jojo Binay worried

By DJ Yap

NOW IT CAN BE TOLD.

In the run-up to the May 14 polls, reelected Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay might have publicly scoffed at anyone's chances of beating him in the contest for the control of the financial capital.

Certainly not Sen. Manuel "Lito" Lapid, he declared.

But unknown to many, there was one potential candidate for Makati mayor who had Binay worried.

The name of this prominent person came up while Binay and his campaign strategists were discussing the personalities the administration might pit against him.

Upon hearing the name, the mayor was, in his own words, "*nagulantang* (taken aback)."

"Who was he?" the INQUIRER asked Binay in a 30-minute interview a week before the polls.

"After the elections I'm going to tell you who he is," he replied.

Last week, just moments after his proclamation as mayor, he finally revealed the identity of the one person he thought may have been a threat to his iron grip of the city—Manny V. Pangilinan of the telecommunications giant Philippine Long Distance and Telephone Co.

"I was concerned because obviously he's a more formidable opponent than Lito Lapid," Binay said.

He said he would not put it past the influential business groups in the city to back Pangilinan, who, based on perception alone, would probably be more friendly to business interests.

Since the beginning of his 18-year rule in Makati, Binay has had a sometimes testy relationship with businessmen, particularly on issues like allowing street demonstrations on Ayala, and his "pro-poor" advocacy.

But make no mistake about it. Binay is not anywhere near believing that Pangilinan could have actually beat him.

Pangilinan, however, denied that he had considered running for Makati mayor. "That is all it is: Speculation," he said last week through PLDT spokesperson Ramon Isberto.

Isberto said Pangilinan has no intention of entering politics and he wants to remain in the world of business.

"MVP (Pangilinan's initials) has said time and again that his place is that of a private citizen, that he can contribute more to the country's progress as an active member of the private sector," he added.

With Riza T. Olchondra

Leviste bail grant 'disappointing'

By Tina G. Santos

THE FAMILY OF RAFAEL DE LAS ALAS YESterday assailed the decision of a Makati judge to grant bail to former Batangas Gov. Antonio Leviste.

"We were very disappointed because he was granted bail despite the obvious cruelty in the killing of my father," said the victim's daughter, Dina Sanchez.

"We believe there was a strong case for murder against him," she stressed during a press conference held at the Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption office in Manila yesterday. "We could not understand, what more proof does the judge need to believe that the case was murder and not homicide? We cannot, however, discount the fact that Leviste is a very powerful, very influential man."

Leviste has confessed to killing De las Alas, his longtime aide, last January. He told the police, however, that he shot the victim in self-defense.

Sanchez's brother, Nazareth, told reporters that they are considering filing a petition asking the judge handling the case, Makati Judge Elmo Alameda, to inhibit himself from the case.

"We may also consider transferring the case from Makati to another court because from the start, we knew that we were at a disadvantage. But we have yet to confer with our lawyer about this move," he said.

VACC founding chair Dante Jimenez said Senior State Prosecutor Emmanuel Velasco would use all legal remedies to correct Alameda's "unjust decision. Prosecutor Velasco will file a motion for reconsideration," he said.

De las Alas' wife, Teresita, said she was "very sad" when she learned about the judge's decision to allow Leviste to post bail. "It's very painful for me to accept the decision. I don't believe the evidence against the suspect was weak," the teary-eyed widow said in Filipino. "All we want is justice."

Leviste walked out of the Makati City jail yesterday, a day after he posted a P300,000 bail.

Man gets away using solon's car plates

By Kristine L. Alave

HE WAS DRUNK AND UNRULY. AND yet the police did not arrest him nor did they try to stop him when he drove away in a Pajero with the number 8 on the license plate—the kind issued only to congressmen.

Mandaluyong police chief, Supt. Ericson Velasquez, said he has ordered an investigation into why the policemen allowed the man who had introduced himself as Ricky Singson to leave after causing trouble in front of a bar-restaurant in Mandaluyong City yesterday.

The man claimed he was the nephew of Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson and the son of the province's congressman, Rep. Eric Singson.

According to a police report, the suspect was on his way to the Watering Hole at Edsa Shangri-la mall in Mandaluyong City when he hit a taxi parked near the mall at 3:30 a.m. The man was obviously drunk when he got off his Pajero, witnesses said.

WAITERS help a man who had one too many. He claimed to be the son of Ilocos Sur Rep. Eric Singson. RAFFY LERMA

There was minimal damage to the taxi and no one was hurt in the incident, Gerry Dizon, Watering Hole dining supervisor said.

When policemen who were called to the scene arrived, they had an argument with the suspect who refused to go with them. He then boasted that he was related to the two Ilocos Sur offficials.

The man then stayed in the bar for several hours, resisting attempts to bring him to the police station. He later issued a check to the taxi driver for the damage to his vehicle and then drove away.

Velasquez said they are still verifying the suspect's identity. He added that he has talked to Representative Singson who denied that the man was his son.

Manila, Davao, Cebu now safest places

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHAT KIND OF JUSTICE SYSTEM DO WE have where a court orders former Manila Congressman Mark Jimenez to lay off his wife but he doesn't heed the order and gets away with it?

A Makati court has issued a temporary protection order on Jimenez, a.k.a. Mario Crespo, to stay away from Carol Castañeda-Crespo. Despite the order, Carol was abducted by eight men, allegedly upon orders from Jimenez, and taken to an rehabilitation center run by a relative.

Why hasn't the court jailed Jimenez for disregarding its order?

But that's a naïve question, considering that in this country many are awed by moneyed and influential people like Mark Jimenez!

* * *

Another Makati judge is in hot water with the Supreme Court after a local town executive filed administrative charges against him.

Makati Regional Trial Court Judge Reinato Quilala, whom I've alluded to several times in this space, was accused by Mayor Ricardo Silverio Sr. of San Rafael, Bulacan, with gross ignorance of the law.

Earlier, the high court suspended Makati Judge Evelyn Arcaya-Chua, another magistrate this corner had criticized but not named, for irregularities in the issuance of temporary restraining orders.

Makati has been notorious for some corrupt judges in its courts. In the 1990s, there were judges whom trial lawyers referred to as "The Magnificent Seven" who allegedly conspired with one another in extorting money from litigants. The judges have retired.

* * *

With Sen. Alfredo S. Lim about to take over the helm as mayor of Manila, there are now three places in the country that have become very dangerous—for criminals and lowlife: Davao City, Cebu City, and the capital city.

Davao City's Rodrigo Duterte and Cebu City's Tomas Osmeña have retained their position in their respective turfs. Duterte is the country's second "Dirty Harry," Lim being the original. Osmeña has copied from Duterte, dealing with his city's underworld with much success.

Davao City and Cebu, dubbed the "Queen City of the South," have become very peaceful hence, more progressive, since criminals have left the two cities in droves and transferred to other places.

Lim was the nemesis of criminals even when he was still a patrolman at the Manila Police Department back in the 50s. I covered Lim for many years as a reporter for another newspaper.

Fred Lim's unorthodox methods in dealing with notorious criminals have raised howls from human rights advocates, but received praises from the grateful residents he has served—those in Manila, where he was once the police chief; Quezon City and Camanava (Caloocan, Malabon, Navotas and Valenzuela) as superintendent of the Northern Police District; and the entire country, as director of the National Bureau of Investigation.

So, if you want to live under safe conditions, why not try settling in Manila, Davao or Cebu?

Puno quits canvas process

By Julie M. Aurelio

CALLING THE CANVASSING OF election returns in Muntinlupa City a "sham process," congressional bet Ricardo "Dong" Puno yesterday ordered his lawyers and poll watchers to withdraw from the proceedings at City Hall.

In a statement, the TV journalist said a large-scale fraud was being perpetuated against the residents through the canvassing of election returns, which he described as an illegal proceeding.

"I cannot ask my lawyers and all our supporters who believe in the fairness of our processes, to continue to participate in this large-scale fraud," said Puno, who is running in the administration ticket against incumbent Rep. Rossano "Ruffy" Biazon.

But his chief legal counsel, Millicent Desiderio, clarified that Puno is not pulling out of the race.

"We didn't ask our lawyers to enter an appearance today. But he is not pulling out of the race," Desiderio told the INQUIRER.

The TV host, brother of Interior Secretary Ronaldo Puno, admitted that although 40 percent of the election returns have not yet been tallied, his legal team would not participate in any further canvassing proceedings.

"My lawyers have reported that contrary to Commission on Election procedures, many ERs which we found dubious and questionable were hurriedly and illegally tabulated despite our vehement and legally well-founded objections," Puno said.

Back-to-school security measures in place

By Jeannette I. Andrade

THE QUEZON CITY POLICE DISTRICT (QCPD) has shifted its focus from post-election security operations to preparing for the resumption of classes when schools open in June.

QCPD director Senior Supt. Magtanggol Gatdula said he would convene a command conference among station commanders, traffic enforcement group heads and barangay personnel next week to iron out security measures for the protection of students and teachers.

These would include antistreet crime operations and traffic management in the vicinity of public and private schools like the University of the Philippines, Ateneo De Manila University, New Era College, Claret School and Miriam College.

"Oplan Balik Paaralan," the QCPD director said, also involves the deployment of police officers to strategic areas in the city, particularly those where students often gather.

DID YOU KNOW

JULIO NAKPIL, born on May 22, 1867 in Quiapo, Manila, was a Katipunero who composed the revolutionary group's official hymn, "Marangal na Dalit ng Katagalugan." After Supremo Andres Bonifacio was executed, Nakpil married the former's widow, Gregoria de Jesus, and had eight children with her. He died in 1960. *Cyril L. Bonabente, Inquirer Research*

QC adopts energy savers

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE HOT SUMMER MONTHS are about to end, but climate change caused by global warming has lingered on.

Aware of the dire consequences of this worldwide phenomenon, the Quezon City government has committed itself to slow down on carbon dioxide emissions and lessen the effect of global warming on lives and the environment.

In a recent meeting, Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. urged businesses and establishments in the city to adopt cost-effective and energy-saving practices to help control carbon dioxide emissions.

Belmonte also directed city government planners to conduct a study on environment-friendly measures for possible implementation in business firms and establishments throughout the city.

The mayor likewise ordered Assistant City Administrator for Internal Affairs Pacifico Maghacot to get more copies of former United States Vice President Al Gore's acclaimed documentary "An Inconvenient Truth" for public viewing in government offices, schools and barangays.

WORLDBRIEFS

Turkey blast

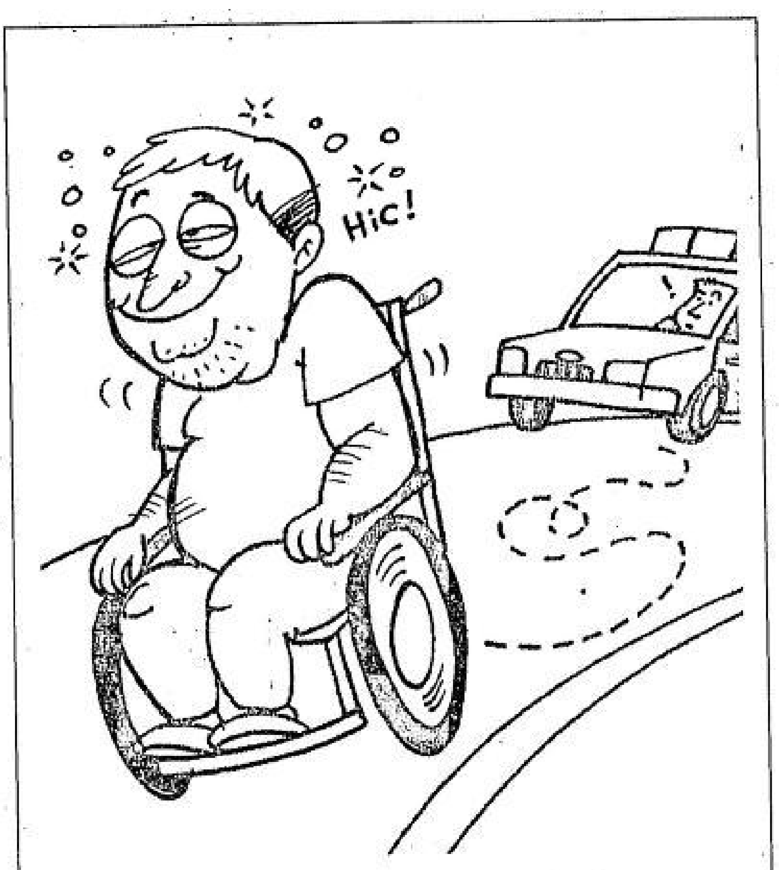
ANKARA—A bomb exploded in one of the Turkish capital's busiest commercial centers, killing six people and injuring 100, authorities said on Wednesday. The blast on Tuesday outside one of the oldest shopping malls in Ankara hurled glass and other debris over a wide area. A body, covered in a white sheet, lay outside the building. Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said four Turks and one Pakistani were killed in the blast. Police said an injured person died later in a hospital, raising the death toll to six. An antiterrorism police official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said on Wednesday the lack of a crater at the explosion site suggested the possibility of a suicide bomb attack, adding that an investigation was under way. *AP*

Case vs Suharto son

JAKARTA—Indonesian prosecutors have revived a graft case involving a lucrative clove monopoly once controlled by a son of former President Suharto, the attorney general's office said on Wednesday. In the 1990s, Hutomo "Tommy" Mandala Putra, youngest son of the former autocratic leader, chaired an agency tasked with regulating the trade of cloves, a key ingredient of a popular local brand of cigarettes. The government released 175 billion rupiah ($20 million) in soft loans to the agency so that it could buy cloves directly from farmers in a bid to improve their livelihoods. "We suspect that not all the money was spent appropriately," said Salman Maryadi, spokesperson for the attorney general's office. *Reuters*

Diabetes drug

PHILADELPHIA—GlaxoSmithKline strongly disagreed with the conclusions reached in an article in the New England Journal of Medicine (NEJM) on Avandia, a widely used drug for treating type 2 diabetes, that the drug raises the risk of heart attacks. In a statement, GSK said the conclusions in the NEJM article are based on incomplete evidence and a methodology that the author admits has significant limitations. GSK said the NEJM paper is based on an analysis of summary information that combines a number of studies—a meta-analysis—which is not the most rigorous way to reach definite conclusions about adverse events. GSK said the most scientifically rigorous way to examine the safety and benefits of a medicine is to conduct large scale, long-term clinical trials in patients with the disease. GSK said it stands firmly behind the safety of Avandia when used appropriately.



German on wheelchair stopped for drunk driving

BERLIN—A WHEELCHAIR-bound German stunned police when they pulled him over for using the road and found he was 10 times over the legal alcohol limit for drivers.

"He was right in the middle of the road," said a spokesperson for police in the northeastern city of Schwerin Tuesday. "The officers couldn't quite believe it when they saw the results of the breath test. That's a life-threatening figure." The 31-year-old told police he had been out drinking with a friend and was a little over a mile from home when a squad car stopped him as he passed through the village of Ventschow.

Police said that because the man was technically traveling as a pedestrian, he could not be charged with a driving offense.

"It's not like we can impound his wheelchair," the spokesperson said. "But he is facing some sort of punishment. It's just not clear yet what exactly that will be." *Reuters*

Climate change to spur allergies, malaria–UN

GENEVA—CLIMATE CHANGE could extend the pollen season and encourage more disease-carrying ticks in northern Europe, and allow mosquitoes to thrive in new areas of Africa and Asia, public health officials said this week.

Experts at the World Health Organization's (WHO) annual assembly in Geneva said global warming had already begun to impact on patterns of water-borne and parasitic illness in areas vulnerable to droughts and floods.

Respiratory and heart problems may become more marked following heat waves and increased particulate matter such as dust in the air, said Bettina Menne of the WHO's European division. She noted allergy-causing pollen could be released earlier and last longer with warmer temperatures.

She cited the movement of ticks, small mites that can spread lyme disease, into northern Europe as an example of new health challenges that will accompany the continual heating-up of the Earth, a phenomenon scientists have linked to human activity.

"Climate change has already affected human health," she told a WHO technical meeting on Monday evening.

Outbreaks of cholera and malaria in the developing world were a result of environmental shifts affecting parasites and water sources, she said.

South Asia was described in the session as particularly at risk because of its flood-prone low-lying countries such as Bangladesh, melting Himalayan glaciers, desert areas and large coastal cities, where climate change could facilitate disease transmission and exacerbate malnutrition pressures.

Maria Neira, the WHO's director for public health and the environment, said it was critical for policymakers to remember that climate change would have a broader impact than often-discussed environmental and economic threats.

Health experts should be more involved in decision-making on energy use and conservation, and should impress upon political leaders the need for more emergency preparedness in health, such as the fast distribution of malaria nets and drugs, Neira said. *Reuters*

28 nabbed in China 'one-child policy' riots

BEIJING—POLICE ARRESTED 28 people for instigating thousands of people to riot over population control policies in southern China, state press said on Wednesday, as residents expressed anger over government abuse.

Seven towns in the Guangxi region erupted in violence amid tensions over fines and other punishments imposed for having too many children, Xinhua news agency said in the first official account of the unrest that began last Friday.

As many as 3,000 people protested in a number of villages in Guangxi, Xinhua said, adding that government offices had been destroyed and cars and motorcycles burnt.

Residents contacted by AFP said tens of thousands of people were involved in the rioting in some towns, the worst of which took place on Friday and Saturday, while Hong Kong press reports have put the figure at 50,000.

Locals said unrest had spread in varying degrees to many other towns, where government work teams had ransacked homes and confiscated property from families unable to pay fines for violating family planning policies.

"There may be problems with the family planning work of the government, which have prompted complaints from residents," Xinhua quoted Huang Shaoming, head of Bobai county where much of the rioting took place, as saying.

Police detained 28 people suspected of instigating the attacks, Xinhua said, citing the local government, while there was no indication of any officials being reprimanded. *AFP*

US crackdown hikes odds for Internet gambling

WASHINGTON—A US CRACKDOWN is expected to take a big bite out of the global market for Internet gambling even as efforts to legalize and regulate online wagering in the United States gather steam.

Bettors from the United States represented nearly half of the estimated $15 billion in online gaming revenues in 2006, according to industry analysts and the Interactive Gaming Association.

But the odds have changed dramatically and the US market is now uncertain since last year's passage of a law to bar banks and credit card issuers from processing payments for online gaming.

Meanwhile the arrest in the US of key players in the industry—including a Briton changing planes in the United States—has also sent chills through the virtual gaming halls.

"All these things are extremely successful in terms of stymying the industry in the US," said Sue Schneider, publisher of Interactive Gaming News and a follower of the industry for a decade.

Warwick Bartlett, a partner of British-based Global Betting and Gaming Consultants, said he expected the US market share of the worldwide online gaming industry to drop from 45 percent in 2006 to 24 percent in 2007 as a result of the latest US law and other actions.

"The impact is going to be greater than expected," he said in a telephone interview.

Worldwide revenues meanwhile, which have been on an upward trajectory since 1999, are likely to fall from $14.9 billion in 2006 to $13.8 billion in 2007, the British consultancy said.

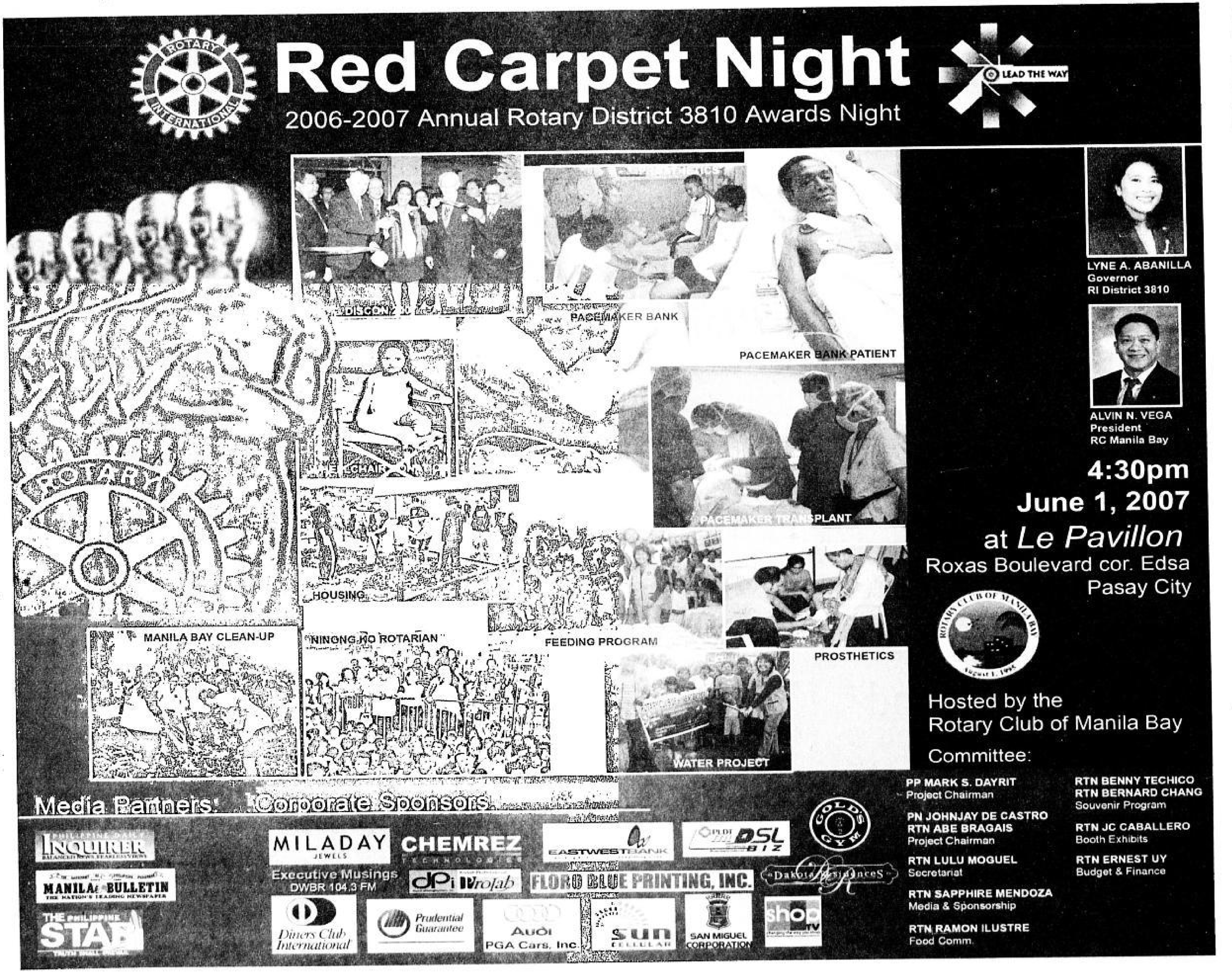
"The industry is quite battered and bruised but they are concentrating on markets other than the United States," Bartlett said.

Arrests and prosecution of persons involved in online gambling operations are not unique to the United States—similar actions have taken place in other countries including France, China and Turkey—but Bartlett said the actions in the world's biggest market has had a major impact.

"In most countries it seems Internet gambling is illegal, but it's a question of how determined the authorities are to stamp it out," he noted.

David Carruthers, former chief executive of BetOnSports, was arrested July 16, as he changed planes at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport. Other executives from the British-registered company were also indicted as part of a US offensive against the operators of gaming websites.

These actions along with the US law signed in October by President George W. Bush have prompted many of the publicly traded and regulated gaming firms—many of whom are registered in Britain—to halt US operations. *AFP*



Red Carpet Night
2006-2007 Annual Rotary District 3810 Awards Night

LYNE A. ABANILLA
Governor
RI District 3810

ALVIN N. VEGA
President
RC Manila Bay

4:30pm
June 1, 2007
at *Le Pavillon*
Roxas Boulevard cor. Edsa
Pasay City

Hosted by the
Rotary Club of Manila Bay

Committee:

PP MARK S. DAYRIT
Project Chairman

PN JOHNJAY DE CASTRO
RTN ABE BRAGAIS
Project Chairman

RTN LULU MOGUEL
Secretariat

RTN SAPPHIRE MENDOZA
Media & Sponsorship

RTN RAMON ILUSTRE
Food Comm.

RTN BENNY TECHICO
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RTN JC CABALLERO
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Bush wins showdown for Iraq funding

WASHINGTON—PRESIDENT GEORGE W. BUSH WON A battle over nearly $100 billion to fund the Iraq war as Democratic leaders in Congress on Tuesday abandoned efforts to withdraw troops for now but pledged to try again in July.

Instead of setting schedules for pulling US troops, it appeared the Democratic-run Congress and the Republican White House agreed for the first time to include conditions prodding Baghdad to make better progress toward quelling violence or risk losing around $1.3 billion in US reconstruction aid.

Bush could waive the provision, however.

Congress wants to deliver by week's end the $100 billion to fund the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan through September.

With the Iraq funding deal, Democrats said the first minimum wage increase in a decade, a high priority for them, would be included. Congress already has approved tax breaks for small businesses to go along with the wage hike.

Democrats also will try to attach about $20 billion in domestic initiatives—from farm aid and better health care for veterans, to health insurance for poor children and money to continue rebuilding states hit by hurricanes in 2005.

Negotiations between the White House and Congress were continuing on details, however.

House liberals were disappointed by the emerging deal, and House of Representatives Speaker Nancy Pelosi, a California Democrat who signed off on the plan, said she opposed the Iraq portion of it.

Pelosi said she was "not likely to vote for something that does not have a timetable" for withdrawing troops from the war that has killed at least 3,420 US soldiers and wounded more than 34,000.

But enough Republicans are expected to join some Democrats in backing the Iraq measure to ensure passage if it is put to a vote later this week, as planned by Pelosi.

House Appropriations Committee Chair David Obey of Wisconsin said Democrats will move the troop withdrawal fight to another bill. "The practical result of this would be we would transfer the debate on the Iraqi war" from the current emergency funding bill to fiscal 2008 war spending bills moving through Congress starting in July, he said.

White House spokesperson Tony Snow said the negotiated measure would provide "the funding and flexibility the forces need.

That's what we've wanted all along." Bush vetoed Congress' first version of this year's emergency war funds bill because it set an Oct. 1 deadline for starting to pull most of the 147,000 soldiers out of Iraq, a goal of anti-war Democrats.

BUSH AP

In postponing their demand for timetables to withdraw combat troops, Democrats acknowledged the political realities.

"The president has made it very clear he's not going to sign timelines (for withdrawing troops). We can't pass timelines over his veto," House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer of Maryland told reporters.

Virginia Democratic Rep. James Moran, who pushed for withdrawing troops, said Democrats would get blamed for any further hang-ups in passing the war funds. "The president has the bully pulpit," Moran said. *Reuters*

Bin Laden ordered Iraq plots, says US

WASHINGTON—OSAMA BIN LADEN ordered al-Qaida's leader in Iraq, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, to form a cell in 2005 to plot attacks outside of Iraq and make the United States his main target, a senior US official said on Tuesday.

Citing newly declassified intelligence, Fran Townsend, President George W. Bush's adviser for homeland security, said the information backs the administration's assertion that US troops must stay in Iraq for now to prevent it from becoming a "terrorist sanctuary." Mindful of its trouble selling its war strategy to the American public, the White House is trying to put the spotlight on bin Laden's connections to Zarqawi, the head of Iraq's al-Qaida wing who was killed in a US air strike in June 2006.

Bush's critics accuse him of trying to deemphasize the role of sectarian fighting in Iraq's chaos and justify an unpopular war by focusing on links to bin Laden and al-Qaida, the authors of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States.

The administration has abandoned earlier charges that al-Qaida had ties to the government of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein before he was toppled in a 2003 US-led invasion.

Townsend spoke to reporters on the eve of a Bush speech at the US Coast Guard Academy to give an update on the war on terrorism, and as congressional Democrats backed off for now on demands Iraq war funding be tied to a troop pullout timetable.

Townsend said US intelligence officials had pieced together accounts of some of Zarqawi's dealings with bin Laden, who has eluded US-led efforts to track him down.

"The intelligence community tells us that in January 2005 bin Laden tasked Zarqawi ... to form a cell to conduct attacks outside Iraq and that frankly America should be his number one priority," she said.

"We know from the intelligence community that Zarqawi welcomed the tasking, claimed he already had some good proposals." She declined, however, to specify any potential targets and would not say whether the plotters had advanced beyond the discussion stage. Al-Qaida has been behind some of the bloodiest bombings in Iraq since the invasion.

Townsend said that in the spring of 2005 bin Laden also told Hamza Rabia, then al-Qaida's top operations man, to brief Zarqawi on the group's "external operations planning, including homeland plots (targeting the United States)." *Reuters*

Dinosaurs frolic with Adam and Eve at 'Garden of Eden'

PETERSBURG, KENTUCKY—DINOSAURS frolic with Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and an animatronic Noah directs work on his Ark in a multimillion-dollar creationism museum set to open next week in Kentucky.

Designed by the creator of the King Kong and Jaws exhibits at the Universal Studios theme park, the stunning 5,400 square-meter facility is built for a specific purpose: refuting evolution and expanding the flock of believers in a literal interpretation of the Bible.

"You'll get people into a place like this that you can't get into a church with a stick of dynamite," said founder Ken Ham from his office overlooking the museum's manicured grounds.

"Some will still sneer, some will say we'd like to hear you again and some will actually believe." The potential audience is huge in a country divided over the origins of the universe and battling in the courts to bring creationism into classrooms.

At a recent debate among Republican presidential hopefuls, three candidates raised their hands when asked who did not believe in evolution.

ARTIST Laura Spence works next to a mechanical Utahraptor at The Creation Museum in Petersburg, Kentucky. It is a fully engaging, sensory experience with murals and realistic scenery, computer-generated visual effects, over 50 exotic animals, life-sized people and dinosaur animatronics, and a special-effects theater. AFP

Polls consistently show that nearly half of Americans believe God created humans in their present form less than 10,000 years ago. Only about 13 percent believe God played no part in the origin of human life.

An Australian who found "Young Earth" creationism while teaching science to school children in Brisbane, Ham, 55, came to the United States in 1987 to spread the word of Biblical truth.

His fundamentalist evangelical ministry—Answers in Genesis—publishes dozens of books, DVDs and curriculums every year teaching Christians how to defend their faith by refuting evolution. *AFP*

Thousands flee Lebanon camp

NAHR AL-BARED—IN CARS AND PICKUP trucks, thousands of Palestinians on Wednesday continued to flee a refugee camp in northern Lebanon where a fragile truce was holding after three days of intense fighting.

The situation appeared calm in the Nahr Al-Bared camp, an impoverished coastal shantytown transformed into a war zone by three days of Army shelling aimed at wiping out an extremist group, an AFP correspondent said.

Men, women and children continued to pour out of the camp in cars and pick-up trucks to the Beddawi refugee camp about 12 kilometers to the south, he said.

The refugees have been fleeing since the two sides halted fire on Tuesday after three days of ferocious fighting between the Lebanese Army and militants of the extremist Islamist movement Fatah al-Islam.

Hundreds of others also made their way to the main coastal city of Tripoli, hours after the al-Qaida-inspired Sunni Muslim group declared a unilateral ceasefire.

On Wednesday, relief works agencies were expected to bring in more aid to the squalid camp where the more than 30,000 refugees had been caught in the line of fire for three days.

The warfare, which has killed 68 people and wounded scores more, is the bloodiest internal feuding since the 1975-1990 civil war and has stoked fears that it could spread to other Palestinian camps and further shake the security of a country riven by sectarian and political tensions. *AFP*

Britain, Russia in standoff over spy case

LONDON—BRITISH PROSECUTORS DEMANDED on Tuesday that Russia extradite an ex-KGB agent to face murder charges over the death of former spy Alexander Litvinenko, plunging chilly ties with Moscow to a new low.

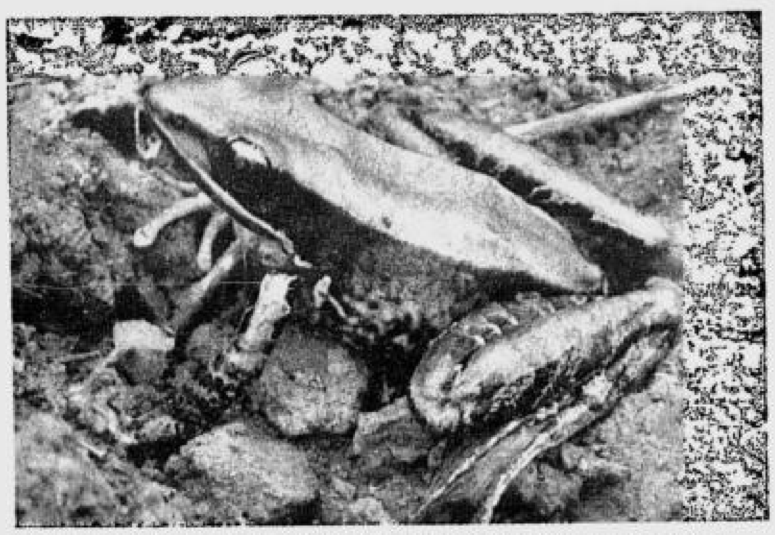
Russian authorities immediately said they would not hand over Andrei Lugovoi despite London's demands for "full cooperation" over the Cold War-style affair.

And the wealthy businessman flatly denied he was guilty, saying it was "a political decision," adding: "I did not kill Litvinenko. I have nothing to do with his death," according to Russian news agencies.

Lugovoi vowed to reveal what he called sensational details about the case.

Britain's Crown Prosecution Service called for his extradition six months after the radiation poisoning of Litvinenko in London last November, described as an "extraordinarily grave crime" by CPS chief Sir Ken Macdonald.

"I have today concluded that the evidence sent to us by the police is sufficient to charge Andrei Lugovoi with the murder of Mr. Litvinenko by deliberate poisoning," Macdonald said at a press conference. *AFP*



THIS PHOTO shows the Odorrana Aureola frog, a new species of mountain frog discovered at Phu Luang National Park in northeast Thailand. AFP

New frog species found in Thailand

BANGKOK—A NEW SPECIES OF mountain frog that changes color in response to its surroundings has been discovered in northeast Thailand, a biologist said on Wednesday.

The Odorrana aureola, known locally as the Phu Luang Cliff frog after the national park where it was found, can grow to 80 millimeters and has a green body which occasionally turns brown, researchers said.

"It reflects its surrounds," said Tanya Chan-ard, curator of Bangkok's National Science Museum, who studied the frog with a team of government biologists and researchers.

Tanya told AFP it was the world's newest species of mountain frog, and was found only in Phu Luang National Park, which covers parts of the three mountainous northeastern Thai provinces.

The frog can only be found at waterfalls and creeks between 1,000 and 1,500 meters above sea level, he added. *AFP*

Female shark gives birth without sex

BELFAST—A FEMALE HAMMERHEAD SHARK THAT gave birth without sex has put the bite into conventional wisdom about reproduction among large vertebrates, according to research published on Wednesday.

The shark's offspring has no paternal DNA, bemused experts from Northern Ireland and the United States report.

The discovery is the first known case of asexual reproduction in sharks but it also raises concerns about the genetic health of dwindling shark populations, they say.

The investigation was launched after an unexpected birth in an aquarium at the Henry Doorly Zoo in Nebraska in December 2001.

The baby's arrival baffled staff, as none of the three possible mother hammerheads in the tank had been exposed to any male hammerhead for the past three years, after they had been caught as babies off Florida.

The research was carried out by scientists from Queen's University Belfast, the Guy Harvey Research Institute at Nova Southeastern University in Florida and the Henry Doorly Zoo.

The head of the Queen's research team and the study's coauthor, Paulo Prodohl, from the School of Biological Sciences, described the findings as "really surprising." "As far as anyone knew, all sharks reproduced only sexually by a male and female mating, requiring the embryo to get DNA from both parents for full development, just like in mammals." *AFP*

A HAMMERHEAD shark swims in a large tank at the Georgia Aquarium, in Atlanta, in this Oct. 27, 2005 file photo. AP

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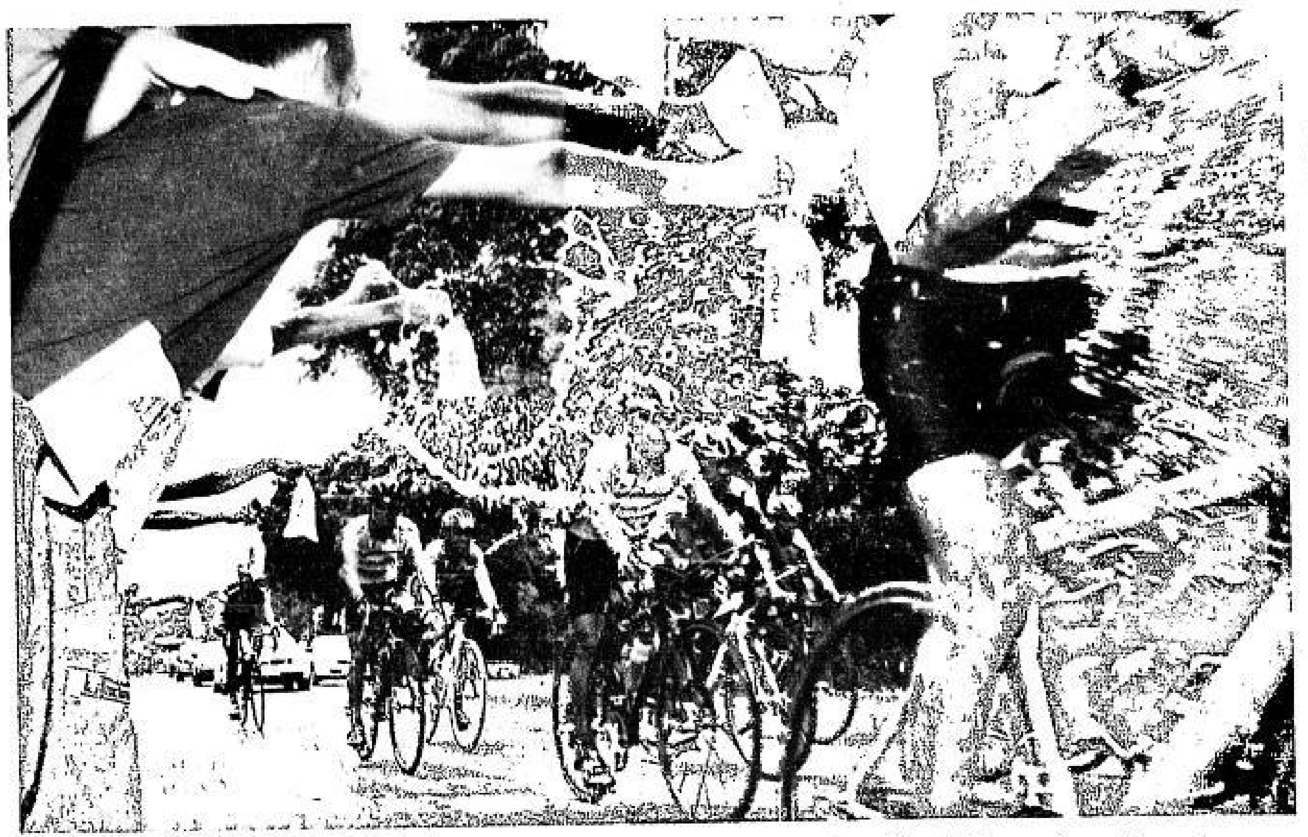
WHAT'S INSIDE

'I was drugged,' writes Foreman on classic loss to Ali /A24

Big 2nd quarter helps Spurs go up, 2-0 /A24



THE MAIN pack of cyclists whizzes past a row of spectators who help ease the stifling hit by passing out to and spraying water on the grizzled summer warriors.

BOY CABRIDO

Ravina new leader; Baguio stages next

By Musong R. Castillo

SAN FERNANDO, LA UNION—BALER Ravina, a 25-year-old who stands no more than five feet and weighs just 48 kilograms, emerged out of the shadows to grab the limelight in the 2007 Tanduay Padyak Pinoy yesterday.

The Asingan, Pangasinan native rode it out with the big guns all day, benefiting when Arnel Quirimit couldn't keep up and Frederick Feliciano crashed out to become the new overall leader after six stages of this annual summer classic on wheels.

Ravina wheeled home with the 15-man wave that finished a shade over

RAVINA/ A24

Padyak Pinoy overall standings after 6 stages

OVERALL INDIVIDUAL

1. B. Ravina, (Cool Pap), 18 hours, 35 minutes, 23 seconds
2. R. Sambrano, (Cossack Vodka), 18:35.52
3. I. Valenzuela, (Cossack Vodka), 18:36.26
4. E. Atilano, (Cargohaus), 18:37.14
5. A. Quirimit, (Mall & More), 18:37.47
6. V. Espiritu, (Wow Magic Sing), 18:38.19
7. S. Barnachea, (Champion), 18:38.29
8. D. Hardin, (Caltex), 18:38.38
9. B. Luzon, (Cool Pap), 18:39.45
10. M. Ramos, (U-Freight), 18:40.03
11. L. Reynante, (AIR21), 18:40.10
12. S. Carrera, (Caltex), 18:42.07
13. E. Domingo, (Champion), 18:42.28
14. E. Obosa, (Bacchus), 18:43.00
15. J. Calderon, (Caltex), 18:43.06
16. A. Calpito, (Bacchus), 18:43.45
17. J. Tolentino, (Caltex), 18:43.56
18. M. Reyes, (Cossack Vodka), 18:44.23

OVERALL TEAM STANDINGS

1. Cossack Vodka, 76 hours, 13 minutes, 12.014 seconds
2. Caltex, 76:17:31.803
3. Vellum, 76:24:15.029
4. Cool Pap, 76:24:17.964
5. Champion, 76:25:06.884
6. Mall & More, 76:33:37.427
7. Wow Magic Sing, 76:40:58.491
8. AIR21, 76:47:55.693
9. Bacchus, 76:53:29.786
10. U-Freight, 76:53:48.108

Cossack riders regain lead

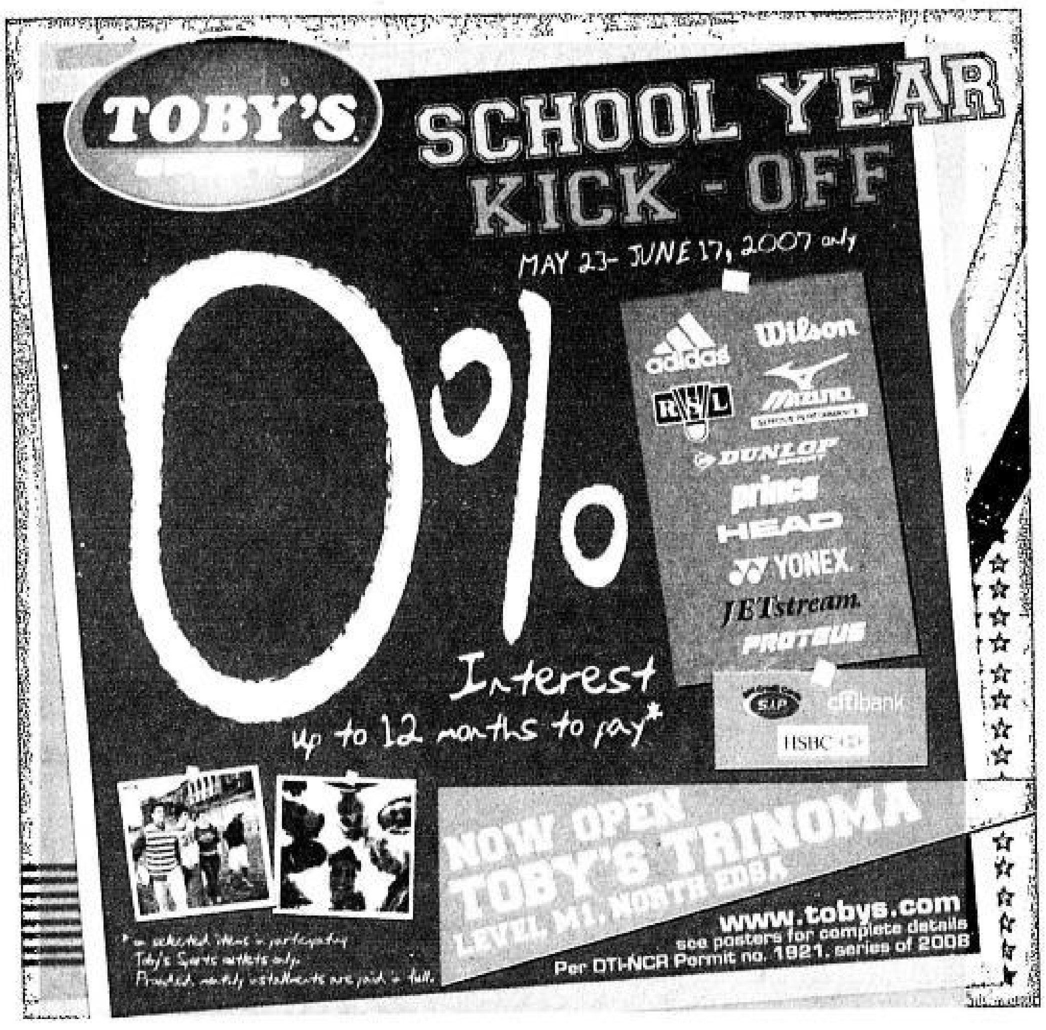
SAN FERNANDO, LA UNION—DEFENDING champion Cossack Vodka regained the team lead in the 2007 Tanduay Padyak Pinoy yesterday after riding brilliantly in the 213-kilometer sixth stage from Laoag to here.

And erstwhile team leader Vellum lost captain Frederick Feliciano to a dislocated collar bone which put a dent on the team's chances of unseating the determined Cossack riders.

Caltex actually won the lap, clocking 20 hours, 35 minutes and 29.231 seconds, with Cossack checking in second for the day in 20:37:47.533 for a total time of 76:13:12.014.

Caltex advanced to second overall, just 4:20 behind the Cossack riders, while Vellum dropped to third more than 11 minutes behind the fourth-placed Cool Pap heading into the crucial Baguio grinds that will decide this Tour starting today.

"It was an unfortunate incident," said Cossack coach Renato Dolosa, in Filipino, referring to Feliciano's spill in a steep climb in Santa town.



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Locals help Alaska derail Air21; Beermen triumph

GAME TODAY (*San Sebastian Recoletos Gym, Cavite City*)
7 p.m.—Purefoods vs Talk 'N Text
GAMES TOMORROW (Ynares Center)
4:35 p.m.—Welcoat vs Coca-Cola
7:20 p.m.—Sta. Lucia Realty vs Ginebra

By June Navarro

ANTIPOLO CITY—WHEN ROSSELL ELLIS limped out with a pulled hamstring, Alaska coach Tim Cone knew it was time for his local Aces to shine.

Willie Miller and Mike Cortez picked up the slack left by Ellis as the Aces pulled off a come-from-behind 117-107 victory over the Air21 Express last night in the Talk 'N Text-PBA Fiesta Cup at the Ynares Center here.

With their 11th victory in 16 games, the Aces tied idle Red Bull for the lead and closed in on one of the two outright semifinal seats also being contested by the Barangay Ginebra Kings (10-5), the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals (9-6).

Danny Ildefonso tallied 20 points and Dorian Peña added 18 points and 11 rebounds as San Miguel Beer rolled to its seventh straight victory at the expense of Welcoat, 119-79, in the other game.

The Beermen improved to 8-7 while handing the Dragons their 13th defeat in 16 games overall.

Playing extended minutes since returning from an injury, Cortez poured 11 of his 14 points after Ellis was pulled out with still three minutes to go in the third period and the Express ahead, 74-71.

Then Miller delivered the clutch baskets that doused Air21's final assault to finish with 25 points on top of eight rebounds and seven steals.

"We just let Mike play out there without rushing him to regain his composure," said Cone, who had fielded the Alaska playmaker for an average of just 15 minutes the past two games.

Cortez, in his third game after a knee injury sidelined him for four months, shot six of 12 from the field on top of four rebounds, two assists and a steal in 25 minutes of action.

"I'm just trying to get into the flow of things and hopefully get back to peak form when the playoffs come," said Cortez.

The Express, who fell to 9-7, now must sweep their remaining games in the classification round to stay in the hunt for an outright semifinal berth.

The scores:

First Game

ALASKA 117—Miller 25, Thoss 18, Ellis 16, Belasco 15, Cortez 14, Ferriols 11, Cariaso 10, Hugnatan 4, Laure 4, Juinio 0.

AIR21 107—David 25, Santos 23, Daniels 16, Telan 15, Arboleda 10, Canaleta 8, Torion 5, Se 3, Dimaunahan 2.

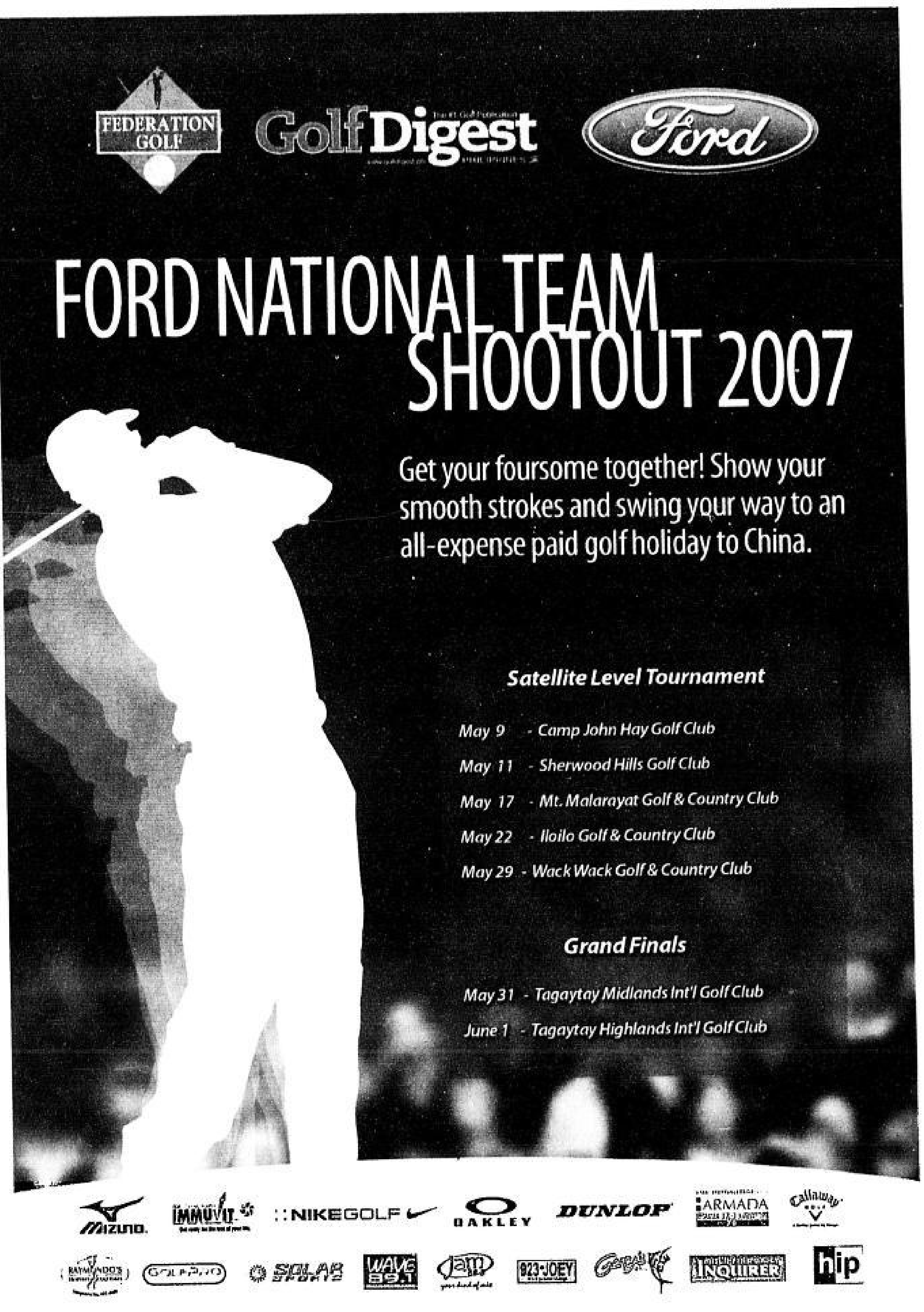
Quarters: 28-26, 53-58, 83-78, 117-107

Second Game

SAN MIGUEL 119—Ildefonso 20, Pena 18, Cablay 13, Calagulo 13, Young 12, Wilson 12, Adriano 11, Tenorio 10, Gonzales 5, Racela 3, Espinas 2, Rodriguez 0.

WELCOAT 79—White 29, Compton 20, Cabatu 16, Reyes 6, Ibanes 4, Lao 2, Wainwright 2, Bagulon 0, Gelig 0, Sta. Maria 0, Mente 0.

Quarters: 30-18, 56-33, 88-61, 119-79



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May 17 - Mt. Malarayat Golf & Country Club
May 22 - Iloilo Golf & Country Club
May 29 - Wack Wack Golf & Country Club
Grand Finals
May 31 - Tagaytay Midlands Int'l Golf Club
June 1 - Tagaytay Highlands Int'l Golf Club

2007 PADYAK PINOY : STAGE 6 (LAOAG CITY) INDIVIDUAL STANDINGS

1ST PLACE	2ND PLACE	3RD PLACE	4TH PLACE	5TH PLACE	6TH PLACE	7TH PLACE	8TH PLACE	9TH PLACE	10TH PLACE	11TH PLACE	12TH PLACE
SHERWIN CARRERA	ENRIQUE DOMINGO	DESI HARDIN	EDGAR BALLEZER	BERNARD LUZON	ALDREN CALPITO	ALBERT BASIRGO	JOEL CALDERON	VICTOR ESPIRITU	RONNEL HUALDA	MERCULIO RAMOS	LLOYD LUCIEN REYNANTE
CALTEX	CHAMPION	CALTEX	COSSACK VODKA	COOL PAP	BACCHUS	VIS-MIN TEAM	CALTEX	WOW MAGIC SING	WOW MAGIC SING	U-FREIGHT	AIR21

Delivered to you by AIR21 SAGOT KO PADALA MO!

Dottie grabs lead with 73, powers RP to team crown

ARDINA

DOTTIE ARDINA CARDED A SECOND straight one-over par 73 to grab a one-stroke lead in the individual race while powering her partnership with Cyna Rodriguez to the team title in the Malaysian Women's Open in Langkawi, Malaysia yesterday.

Ardina posted a 146 total for a one-shot lead over fellow Asian Gamer Anya Tanpinco, who rallied with the day's best round of 71 at the hazard-laden Datai Bay Golf Club.

Rodriguez, who showed the way in the first round with a 72, fumbled with a 77 and tumbled down to third with a 149.

But that did not stop Ardina and Rodriguez from claiming the team championship as the Filipinos finished with a combined 36-hole output of 289 to beat their counterparts from Thailand by 18 strokes.

Thai ace Yupaporn Kawinpakorn, who humbled Ardina and company in last year's Philippine Ladies Amateur Open at The Country Club, dropped farther behind in the individual derby at 150 after a second three-over 75.

Hathaikorn, another Thai bet, hobbled with an 83 and a 160.

The 13-year-old Ardina is gunning for a third international title in the event that serves as part of the RP team's buildup for the Junior World championship in San Diego.

New baseball league up

A NEW BASEBALL LEAGUE, PUT UP TO further develop the sport and raise the quality of play to a higher level, unveils over the weekend at the Rizal Memorial baseball stadium with an inaugural series featuring five teams from Manila, Makati, Laguna, Cebu and Negros Occidental.

Baseball Philippines, a community-based league designed not only to provide support for baseball but also to sustain the resurgence of the sport in the youth and adult sectors, formally kicks off this Sunday with Community Sports, Inc. (CSI), a joint venture between Sports Vision Management Group, Inc., and Pure Play Sports Management, Inc., staging the event.

The league also aims to promote the sport as an alternative to community-based entertainment and at the same time, develop athletes who can be tapped and trained to become members of the national team to various international competitions.

In fact, the Philippine Amateur Baseball Association, through president Hector Navasero, has allowed members of the national team to join the tournament.

LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES
Regional Office V
Legazpi City

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposal together with 10% bid bond for the purchase of the property listed below will be received at the Office of the Branch Head, Land Bank of the Philippines, Sorsogon Branch, Sorsogon City, not later than **June 8, 2007, 2:00 in the afternoon** at which place, date and time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

In case of closely clustered top bids (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be immediately followed by an open auction in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate.

ITEM	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID
1	Two (2) parcels of adjacent lot containing a total area of 19,143 square meters, with the following improvements/chattels: 1.1. Ice Plant Building (780 sq.ms.) 1.2. Residential Building (180 sq.ms.) 1.3. Two (2) units 30-tonner refrigeration equipment with complete accessories 1.4. One (1) unit Cummins 300 KVA generator set	Sitio Pawa, Lajong, Bulan, Sorsogon	P17,200,000.00
2	Three (3) contiguous parcels of land with total area of 3,980 sq.ms.	Sitio Pawa, Lajong, Bulan, Sorsogon	P1,500,000.00

Note: Item No. 1 is under lease until June 27, 2007.

Bidding forms may be obtained from the Office of the Branch Head, Sorsogon Branch, Land Bank of the Philippines. The sale of the properties shall be **"AS-IS-WHERE-IS"**. The winning bidder/s shall take possession of the awarded properties without seeking assistance from the Bank.

LAND BANK RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN AND TO ACCEPT THE BID MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE LBP SHALL BE FINAL AND BINDING.

(Sgd.) **CECILIA C. BORROMEO**
COMMITTEE ON ASSET DISPOSAL
LAND BANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

(PDI - May 22, 23 & 24, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
PORO POINT MANAGEMENT CORPORATION
A Subsidiary of Bases Conversion Development Authority

RE-INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT SERVICES FOR THE UPGRADING OF THE SAN FERNANDO AIRPORT, PHASE 1

The Poro Point Management Corporation (PPMC), a subsidiary of the Bases Conversion and Development Authority, through the PPMC 2007 Corporate Operating Budget, intends to apply the sum of **Twenty Six Million Sixty Nine Thousand Seven Hundred Thirty Two and 50/100 Pesos (Php26,069,732.50)** being the **Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC)** to payments under the Contract for Construction Management Services for the Upgrading of the San Fernando Airport, Phase I. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at the opening of the financial proposals.

PPMC now calls for the submission of Letters of Intent (LOIs)/Expressions of Interest from potential bidders to apply for eligibility and short listing for Construction Management Services for the Upgrading of the San Fernando Airport, Phase I.

Eligibility Documents shall be issued and made available to interested applicants upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00) at the PPMC, Administration Building, Poro Point Freeport Zone, Poro, San Fernando City, La Union from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on May 24 to 30, 2007.

Interested applicants shall submit their LOIs together with their accomplished Eligibility Documents to the SBAC at the PPMC, Administration Building, Poro Point Freeport Zone, Poro, San Fernando City, La Union on or before 9:00 A.M., June 6, 2007. Opening of eligibility documents shall be on June 6, 2007, 9:30 A.M. at the above address in the presence of the prospective Bidders' representatives who choose to attend. Applications for eligibility shall be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. Only those that are shortlisted shall be entitled to submit bids.

The SBAC shall draw up the shortlist of consultants from those who have submitted their LOIs/Expressions of Interest and have been determined as eligible both in accordance with the provisions of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184) and its Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A). The short list of prospective bidders shall consist of a maximum of five (5) consultants. The criteria and rating system for short listing are:

Firm Experience and Track Record	**50 points**
Technical Staff Experience	**50 points**

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to Filipino citizens or organizations with at least sixty percent (60%) interest belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, only Bids from shortlisted consultants will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in the Eligibility Documents. In accordance with the IRR-A of R.A. 9184, the contract will only be awarded to the Highest Rated and Responsive Bidder who was determined as such during post-qualification.

PPMC shall evaluate bids using the **Quality-Cost Based Evaluation/Selection (QCBE/QCBS)**. The criteria and rating system for the evaluation of bids shall be provided in the Instruction to Bidders.

Interested Eligible Bidders may obtain further information from the PPMC and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. on June 13 to 19, 2007.

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the SBAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Ten Thousand Pesos (Php 10,000.00). The Bidding Documents shall be issued and made available at the PPMC, Administration Building, Poro Point Freeport Zone, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., on June 13 to 19, 2007. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the Bidder or his authorized representative.

PPMC shall hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders at 9:00 A.M. on June 20, 2007 at the San Fernando Airport, Terminal Building, Canaoay, San Fernando City, La Union.

Eligible Bidders must submit their Bids to the SBAC at the PPMC Administration Building, Poro Point Freeport Zone, Poro, San Fernando City, La Union on or before 9:00 A.M., July 2, 2007. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid security in the form and in the amount specified in the Bidding Documents. Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bid opening shall be on July 2, 2007, 9:30 A.M. at the above address in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend.

The contract shall be completed within four hundred thirty-five (435) days from the issuance of Notice to Proceed.

The PPMC reserves the right to reject any and all bids, annul the bidding process, or not award the contract at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

Poro Point Management Corporation
Poro Point Freeport Zone
Poro, City of San Fernando, La Union
Tel. (072) 242-4016
Fax (072) 242-0683
ppmc@sflu.com

(Sgd.) **ATTY. ANTHONY C. MANGUIAT**
Chairman
Special Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–May 24, 2007)

Seaba win RP five's only goal, says Chot

By Francis T.J. Ochoa

RATCHABURI, THAILAND—THE pricey Philippine squad arrived here Wednesday for the Southeast Asian Basketball Association (Seaba) men's championship with a mindset far different from the one it sported just last week.

"We're here to win," said RP head coach Chot Reyes, after a two-hour drive from the capital city of Bangkok, where they touched down following a three-hour flight from the Philippines.

In previous matches, particularly in the recent Fiba Champion Cup in Tehran, Reyes has emphasized that the San Miguel Corporation-backed RP five was undergoing a learning process and that the game results were unimportant.

With a slot to the Fiba-Asia men's championship—the gateway to the Beijing Olympics—at stake, Reyes is now singing a different tune.

"We're here to qualify for the Fiba-Asia, period," he said.

The RP squad, whose roster was formed by plucking millionaire superstars from their mother clubs in the Philippine Basketball Association, is far from the form Reyes wants the team in for the Olympic qualifier to be held in Tokushima, Japan late in July.

And playing here isn't going to help the team cut corners.

"There's absolutely no learning to be done here," Reyes said. "We're here to qualify for the Fiba-Asia and that's the only goal we have in mind."

REYES PDI PHOTO

The opposition, as per recent history of Southeast Asian basketball, is expected to get flattened and bullied by a squad expected to win by huge margins. Never mind if a "mysterious" home squad has leaked feelers that it will field a unit beefed up by US NCAA Division I players.

Aside from Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia are hoping to forge an upset against the country, which has dominated the sport in this little corner of the globe.

Reyes has at his disposal the likes of Asi Taulava, Jimmy Alapag, Renren Ritualo, Mark Caguioa, Jayjay Helterbrand, Danny Seigle, Dondon Hontiveros, Kerby Raymundo, Mick Pennisi, Enrico Villanueva, Ranidel De Ocampo and late add-on KG Canaleta, a replacement for injured multitasking forward Tony dela Cruz.

The team, built to challenge the Asian heavyweights for a shot at an Olympic berth, is expected to bully its rivals, but Reyes says it's not the manner of winning that is important in this particular stint.

"Whether we win big or small, it doesn't matter as long as we win," he declared.

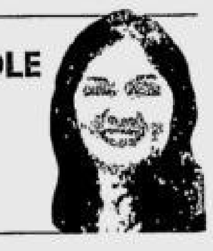
The RP squad was supposed to practice at 3:30 p.m. local time but was still awaiting its shuttle service to the coliseum at 3:45 p.m.

The Nationals drew a bye for Thursday's hostilities, then will play Singapore on May 25, Indonesia on the 26th, Malaysia on the 27th, and Thailand on the 28th in a format that calls for the top team at the end of the single round-robin affair to be declared the champion.

The top two squads will book slots to the Fiba-Asia championships.

Olympic journey starts in Seaba

IN HUDDLE



Beth Celis

TO AVOID TURNING THE BLESSED event into a carnival, Kris Aquino requested the media not to mention the church where her two-month old son Baby James Yap would be christened.

Nevertheless, when I got to the Don Bosco chapel in Makati last Saturday afternoon, there was still a small throng of fans gathered at the venue.

Earlier, Kris had enumerated the *ninongs* and *ninangs* she had chosen. I wondered who would be in the short list of her hubby James Yap who, at the time, had not come up with his selection. Kris said they would be limiting the number to 10 "close friends."

James looked handsome in his black, long-sleeved shirt which looked like a fitted *barong tagalog* while Kris was stunning in her red and black spaghetti-strapped dress.

Later at the reception, I noticed that the color motif of the decors matched those of the couple's garb. The party place was festooned with clusters of red, black and white balloons while an assortment of tiny teddy bears of the same colors, arranged in a pyramid, served as centerpiece of each table.

"Black, red and white are the only colors a baby of James' age can recognize," Kris explained.

* * *

The culinary delights for the afternoon's heavy *merienda* fare were provided by two caterers, one serving a wide assortment of Japanese sushi, the other a fusion of dishes that included seafood kabob and black paella. Of course there was also roasted calf and pigs and a host of yummy desserts which I could only drool over.

By celebrity standards, the number of guests was manageable, with not too many coming either from the showbiz or basketball circles.

They were mostly friends and relatives of James and Kris.

Only two tables, in fact, were occupied by PBA and media personalities like Purefoods governor Rene Pardo and wife Beth, PFC president Butch Alejo and partner Cynthia, coach Ryan Gregorio and family, and James' fellow cagers: Nelbert Omolon, Adonis Sta. Maria and Jun Limpot, who was one of three ninongs James chose.

Papa Jun, who has shaved off his moustache, said he didn' know why he was given the honor of being the godfather over the rest of the team.

The other two are James' manager Dondon Monteverde and PGA Cars' Mike Coyiuto.

* * *

"Why Papa Jun?" I asked James when he approached our table.

It took a while before the cager could answer.

"Vibes," was his simple reply.

"You see, *kahit siya hindi rin niya alam kung bakit ako ang pinili niya*," Jun said.

Incidentally, the veteran cager is all excited about a book business he has ventured into, where he will be setting up stores in selected shopping malls and book fairs in different schools.

"Pick a Book, that's the name of the store," Jun said.

* * *

Despite our fourth place finish in the recently concluded Fiba Asia Champions Cup, PBA chairman and BAP/SBP vice chairman Ricky Vargas feels that the Tehran experience was "very good for the team , if only because we were exposed to international competition and officiating."

"Their egos may be bruised but the nationals had their shining moments and this will give them the impetus to pursue our dream which is to participate in the Beijing Olympics. We just have to work harder and train harder and try to develop the heart of a Manny Pacquiao, who does not accept defeat," Ricky said.

The journey to Beijing starts in Ratchaburi, Thailand, where the RP team is set to compete May 24 to 29 in the Seaba qualifier for the Fiba Asia Men's Championship.

"This is our best chance to make it back to the Olympics. We must not let it slip away," Ricky said.

* * *

Congratulations to Robbie Puno, recently proclaimed congressman of the first district of Antipolo.

Before this, he was marketing director of the PBA, and then host of a television-radio talk show on sports aired over Solar Sports. As soon as he gets settled in his new profession, Robbie said he will resume his program which he hosts with Jude Turcuato and Patricia Hizon.

I don't have the complete list but I also want to extend my congratulations to the other sporting personalities who won in this year's elections: Jason Webb, councilor, first district of Parañaque, Mar Morelos and Gerry Esplana, councilors, first district of Valenzuela, Bulacan and Ato Agustin, councilor of San Fernando.

Puentevella wants 24 more SEAG events

By Marc Anthony Reyes

NEWLY APPOINTED SOUTHEAST Asian Games chief of mission Monico Puentevella yesterday said the Philippine Olympic Committee will pursue two major plans of action during the SEAG Federation Council meeting in Thailand next month.

The POC first vice president said the POC will "seriously push" for the inclusion of at least 24 events stripped from the 2005 SEAG calendar where the country won gold medals.

"We will do everything to lobby for these events because we won gold medals in those sports two years ago," Puentevella told the INQUIRER.

Puentevella also expressed confidence that the country can muster enough support from other SEAG members regarding the sports disciplines and events that were stricken off the list, including events in diving, dragon boat, wushu and arnis.

He also added that the POC will "send a strong message" against "post-event press releases" which didn't come from the organizers themselves or from WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency).

The re-elected Bacolod congressman was referring to the "news" that came out of the Doha Asian Games last year alleging that the Filipino boxers Violito Payla and Joan Tipon had tested positive for prohibited substance.

"It created animosity instead of camaraderie among SEAG member nations," said Puentevella.

The SEAG Federation Council meeting on June 2-5 in Thailand will finalize the list of events to be included in the December Games. Richie Garcia, co-chair of the SEAG Task Force, has been named one of the deputy chiefs of mission.

SPORTSWATCH

Iloilo does it again

THE ILOILO MEN EMERGED LEADERS OF THE South in the VisMin leg of the Ford National Team Shootout 2007 with a 13 under par score of 57. Mark Rivera, Timothy Parker, Jose Recto Isada, and Mervyn Cornelius shone brightly in the back nine; leading by two strokes against runners-up Enrico Solon, Edwin Espina, Nolan Rada, and Philip Huang of Alta Vista Golf & Country Club with a net score of 59. Second-placers were Andrew Chua, Salvador Aguirre, Jr., Ponciano Saldaña and Butch Jamerlan with a net 62. Winners received gift certificates from sponsors Golf Digest Philippines, Mizuno and VMV Hypoallergenics. They will be on their way to Tagaytay Midlands and Highlands for the Ford National Team Shootout 2007 Grand Finals.

ICA stuns Roosevelt

KARA ACEVEDO, JOHNIN JAO AND GRETCHEN HO combined for 32 points to lift Immaculate Conception Academy Greenhills past Roosevelt College, 25-18, 25-19, last Sunday in the 3rd Shakey's Girls' Volleyball League (GVL) at the Ateneo Blue Eagle Gym. It was the first win of the Greenhills based school in Bracket B. Philippine Institute of Quezon City (PIQC) beat Holy Family, 25-17, 25-17, with Denise Lim, Janeczka Tou and Joanne Sy combining for 52 points, to share the lead with UST in Bracket C with 2 wins. Meanwhile, St. Jude Catholic School took advantage of their height to rout Assumption Antipolo 25-9, 25-12, in Bracket B for a 1-1 card.

Fastest Win today

COCKERS OF MUNTINLUPA, PARAÑAQUE, PASAY, Las Piñas, Laguna and Cavite converge today at Las Pinas Coliseum as the Fastest Win One-Cock Timbangan fires off at 1 p.m. The fastest win champion, set to receive P10,000, will be declared after every ten fights. Entry fee is P1,100. Coliseum manager Alex Tobias and host Elmer Almaz announced these bonus prizes: P20,000 for overall fastest win champ; P15,000 for second; P10,000 for third and P5,000 for slowest winner. Meanwhile, Dahvez of Paolo Daves and Road Runner of Danny Albertopped the 3-cock derby last May 19. Another 3-cocker unfolds this Sunday with Marlon de Castro as host. Contact 873-1040; 874-3910 and 0926-7450375 (Julius).

ISTANBUL CUP: Russia's Maria Sharapova returns the ball to Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova during the WTA Istanbul Cup 2007 Tennis Tournament in Turkey. Sharapova won, 6-4, 7-6. AP

Quezon nips Tagaytay

LUCENA CITY—QUEZON-VILLA ANITA leaned on ex-pro Bryan Gahol to nip Tagaytay Spring, 66-64, Tuesday in the 2007 Spring Cooking Oil-NBC National Cup basketball tournament at the Quezon Convention Center here.

Gahol tipped in a pass from Robin Mendoza in the last 2.4 seconds to deal the Cooking Oil Masters of NBC president Natahniel "Tac" Padilla and league EVP Mayor Bambol Tolentino their first loss in five games.

It was the fourth win in nine games for the Quezonians.

Nino Marquez tried to save the game for Spring but his last-ditch attempt failed, the ball bouncing off the rim at the buzzer to send the hometown crowd into a frenzy.

After trailing 29-35 at halftime, the Quezon cagers engaged the Cooking Oil Masters in a shootout and managed to inch ahead 48-46.

Gahol and Jeff Sanders led Quezon with 16 and 15 points, respectively, while Rodel Mallari paced Tagaytay Spring with 12.

The NBC game of the week is being aired at 6:30 p.m. every Friday over Basketball TV. League updates can be accessed at www.nbcphilippines.com.

Henkel eyes incentive vs Dazz today

HENKEL SISTA TAKES ITS TURN AT THE TWICE-TO-BEAT INCENTIVE in the quarterfinals when it tangles withy Dazz 'Sang Patak today in the PBL Unity Cup at the Olivarez Sports Center in Parañaque.

After winning five of their last seven outings, the third-running Super Sealers can march outright to the next round with the twice-to-beat bonus with another victory in the 4 p.m. match.

GAMES TODAY
(Olivarez Sports Center)
2 p.m.—Harbour Centre vs San Miguel-Magnolia
4 p.m.—Henkel Sista vs Dazz 'Sang Patak

Defending champion Harbour Centre, already in the semifinals along with Cebuana Lhuillier Pera Padala, collides with San Miguel-Magnolia at 2 p.m.

The Batang Pier will unveil a suprise package in Fil-Am Nick Stephens, a 6-foot-5 swingman from Holy Names University in Oakland, California, in their bid to catch the Moneymen on top at 9-2.

Born to a Filipino mother, Stephens is 23 years old and could play big guard and small forward.

"He's very excited to be playing here. He's a welcome addition to the team especially at this stage of the conference," said Harbour manager Eric Arejola.

Henkel Sista and Harbour are favored over their respective foes, who are in the cellar with 3-7 slates.

Bannered by Khiel Misa, Samigue Eman and Fil-American Ryan Reyes, Henkel Sista overcame a slow start to climb to third at 5-6 in a tie with idle Toyota Balintawak.

"Against Dazz, we have to play with more consistency. There is a danger that we might become complacent," said coach Caloy Garcia. "We have to play with more heart."

Marc Anthony Reyes

Makati 8-cocker May 28

A CONFRONTATION AMONG THE country's top cockers looms when the Makati Invitational 8-Cock Derby blasts off on May 28, 30 and June 1 at the Makati Coliseum.

Last February, the WTJ Sports and Amusement Corp., headed by promoters Lito Orillaza, Rudy Salud and William Co, also presented the Makati International Derby.

Sportsman Jorge "Nene" Araneta and Roger Roberts of Georgia banner the latest batch of competitors. Other prominent registrants are Ramon Revilla, 2006 Cavite International derby champs Richard Bates and Gov. Ito Ynares, Jun Santiago, Danding Cojuangco, 2007 World Slasher Cup cham Gengen Arayata, Manny Pacquiao, Richard Kelly of Alabama, Efren Canlas, the team of Chris Nesmith, Nene Abello and Willie Villarica, Aster Lopez, Joe Cuyugan and Zaldy Sandoval of California, Ricky Valencia, Osang dela Cruz and Danny Soriano.

Contact 896-3545 and 895-6475 (Joan or Stephanie).

CKP 168.COM IN DISNEYLAND. Members of the CKP168.COM basketball team at the Disneyland in Hong Kong. The team ruled the first four tournaments they took part in—Marikina Open, Metroball Open, Division F and PICAA Open.

Sherwood Hills Inv'l up

SHERWOOD HILLS GOLF CLUB, recently picked by Golf Digest International as the 85th best golf course outside the United States, is set to stage a special invitational tournament on Saturday in Trece Martirez, Cavite.

The one-day affair is a two-man team competition (one member and one guest) adopting the best ball format.

Tournament fee is P6,000 per team and P4,000 per individual in the guest division. It is inclusive of green fees, giveaways, lunch, raffle ticket and practice rounds up to tomorrow.

Sherwood Hills chair Robert John Sobrepena and sports and games committee head Jimmy Borromeo will lead a full field of 144 participants.

Consuming media on their own terms

OBSERVING THE YOUTH HAS always been fascinating. Among the different market segments that exist, they are the most dynamic. Just like the mobile phones and the gadgets they are born with, their motivations and emotions are ever changing from generation to generation. It is, therefore, unwise to understand the young based on ones own experience as a teenager. The youth's exposure to external trappings - technology, fashion, music, play an important role in shaping their behavior and life choices.

The study into the media habits and attitudes of the youth (15-24 year olds) conducted by phd Media Network shows that the youth are motivated by a deep sense of community, desire for personalization and self-expression. The study also revealed that the youth use media to satisfy these core needs. Moreover, they are no longer passive consumers of media like their older counterparts, this generation demand media on their own terms. This explains the popularity of i-pod, mp3, desktop and mobile phone themes among others which are of "programmable" content. Internet, for instance, has been a top choice over radio to satisfy their music fix because they are not limited to the DJ's play list. The so-called YRD Youth has given rise to very different attitudes and responses towards advertising and marketing tactics.

We have seen the transition from Broadcast to Podcast. Webcast to Mycast. However we may call it, it essentially means one thing - the consumer is in control. Technology allows them to filter the messages that come their way, allowing only those that are relevant, entertaining and of value. While it appears to be challenging, the prospects are also exciting as there seem to be a promise of powerful channels to have the youth willingly and enthusiastically engage with the brands.

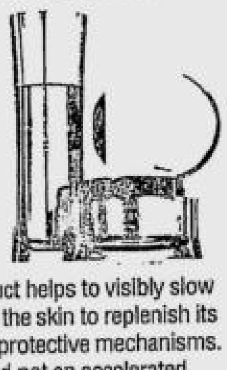
The study also revealed that as media becomes more personal, advertising receptivity decreases. Advertising in traditional media is generally acceptable than advertising in new media channels (largely referring to digital/ online ads). Digital media has an edge in fulfilling the YRD Youth's core needs to personalize, stay connected with their community and self-expression. As integrated digital media is gaining a prominent role in the youth's life, traditional media find themselves gearing towards more serious and specific information provision. TV remains as a popular source of entertainment, radio to a lesser extent. Print, though not heavily consumed on the other hand is seen as a credible source of information that is socially-relevant and those that are trivial in nature.

The phd RU YRD Study is a qualitative look at how the youth of today relates with their community and their consumption of traditional and digital media. In-depth group discussions were facilitated among tech-savvy youth aged 15-24. The study aims to identify opportunities for media integration among the youth and how to make it more relevant and meaningful in their lives. For more insights contact Hermie de Leon at hermie.deleon@phdnetwork.com.ph or Malou Abad-Querijero at malou.querijero@phdnetwork.com.ph

Pharaoh turns 14

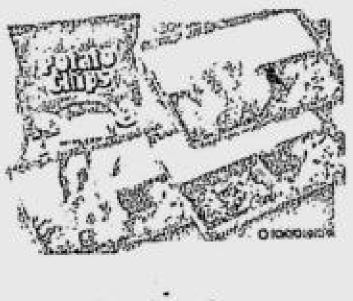
PHARAOH BUSINESS AND ENTERTAINMENT CENTER, THE oasis of power and pleasure, cordially invites you to its 14th year anniversary presentation. Join them on May 24, Thursday for the celebration entitled Cleos Uninhibited featuring the lovely Cleos and Jewels. The party starts at 3 p.m. with roast calf and welcome drinks sponsored by Johnnie Walker Pure Malt (Green Label). Have yourself some fun and entertainment and more. Get a chance to win a tour package for 2 to Sentosa Singapore. It's an ultimate celebration you wouldn't wanna miss. For more information, please call Pharaoh Business & Entertainment Center at the following numbers: (632) 813-0921 / 22, (63916) 308-8209.

Elizabeth Arden's Intervene Pause & Effect



ELIZABETH ARDEN IS PROUD TO BE THE FIRST brand in the prestige arena to make use of a breakthrough technology, known as Biodormin technology, to nip aging in the bud and keep a woman looking in the bloom of her life. Introducing Intervene Pause & Effect, recommended for women between 25 and 35 years old. This new product line allows the modern woman with an active lifestyle, the power to pre-empt the effects of premature aging caused by the sun, stress and environmental aggressors. This revolutionary product helps to visibly slow down the effects of accelerated skin aging, allowing the skin to replenish its energy reserves and regain its natural strength and protective mechanisms. This helps the skin to operate on an optimal level and not an accelerated one. The result is skin that looks younger and healthier. Intervene Pause & Effect is available at Elizabeth Arden counters at all Rustans outlets and SM Makati, North Edsa and Megamall. The range consists of: Moisture Cream, Moisture Lotion and Daily 3-in-1 Cleanser Exfoliator Primer.

Jack 'n Jill Potato Chips Nori at Tokyo Tokyo



CUSTOMERS VISITING TOKYO Tokyo will get a free Jack 'n Jill Potato Chips Nori snack pack for every purchase of any item from Tokyo Tokyo's BestSeller line such as Shrimp and Veggie Tempura, Beef Misono, Beef Teriyaki and Pork Tonkatsu. The Jack 'n Jill Potato Chips Nori-Tokyo Tokyo tie-up runs from May 1 to June 9, in participating branches within GMA.

Spiderman 3 Jollibee Chickenjoy Bucket

MARVEL COMICS AND JOLLIBEE LET YOU take home all the exciting web-slinging fun of the latest Spiderman movie with the limited-edition Spiderman 3 Chickenjoy Bucket! You'll be climbing the walls with the juicylicious, crispylicious taste of Chickenjoy when you go home with this exclusive collector's item. Featuring special commemorative artwork, the Spiderman 3 Chickenjoy Bucket is a great mealtime or snacktime treat for kids –and kids at heart –of all ages. Watch Spiderman 3 and see everyone's favorite webcrawler battle supervillains like Sandman and the Green Goblin –plus a scary new archnemesis, Venom! Then, relive all of Spiderman's exciting adventures again and again with your family and friends while enjoying a fresh, hot meal of Jollibee Chickenjoy. But you better swing into action soon because this limited edition bucket will be available from Jollibee for a limited time only, from from April 28 to May 28 or while supplies last.

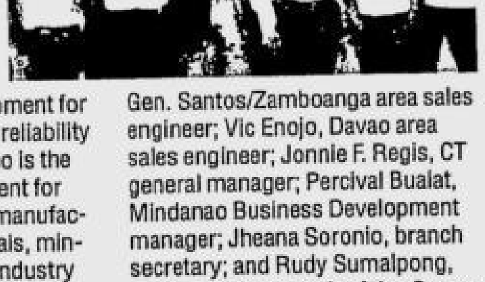
Red Ribbon's 'Must-Have Cake' campaign

MUCH THOUGHT AND CARE GO INTO THE creation of a Red Ribbon cake. Only the best ingredients are chosen, baked to perfection and lovingly decorated producing great-tasting and great-looking cakes with the highest quality. From the all-time favorite Chocolate Mousse, to the classic Black Forest to the famous Chocolate Marjolaine, Red Ribbon's wide array of delectable cake offerings makes any celebration special. This year, Red Ribbon showcases its wonderful cake creations by launching the "Must-Have Cake-of-the-Month" campaign. This campaign successfully re-introduces the many delicious cakes that Red Ribbon currently offers by featuring a cake per month. This May, try Red Ribbon's Tiramisu Meltdown! A heavenly 3-layer cake of choco chiffon and cream cheese filling, dappled with a hint of coffee liquor and topped with chocolate curls and melt-in-your-mouth dark chocolate ganache. And, as an icing on the cake, Red Ribbon gives away a free cake lifter for every purchase of Tiramisu Meltdown, in regular, medium or large sizes. Whatever the celebration, it's more beautiful with a Red Ribbon! Visit a Red Ribbon branch near you today or call 747-7777 for hassle-free delivery.

SUBIK! SUBIK! FEST PREPARATIONS FINALIZED

Preparations for the much-awaited spectacular Subik! Subik! Festival were finalized by the recent signing of a memorandum of agreement (MOA) between its organizers, the Greater Subic Bay Tourism Bureau (GSBTB) and Media Trade Exchange Inc (MTE). The four-day festival, happening June 8-11, will be highlighted by cultural and sports activities including a beauty pageant for Miss Greater Subic Bay Tourism Bureau (GSBTB) 2007 and an exciting trade fair showcasing products from the four areas participating in the big event: Bataan, Olongapo, Subic Bay Freeport and Zambales (BOSZ). The four signatories to the MOA were GSBTB chair George Lorenzana and Malou Fermin of the Greater Subic Bay Tourism Bureau (GSBTB); Linda Lim of the Olongapo City Tourism Council; and Resti Reyes Jr, president of Media Trade Exchange Inc, the newly-appointed marketing arm for the event. Shown during the MOA signing are (seated from left): Linda Lim (treasurer), George Lorenzana (chair), Resti Reyes and Malou Fermin (Provincial Director, DTI-Zambales); (at the back, from left): Meg del Rosario (By The Sea Resort), Cindy Kim (Segye IRC), Raymund Gil Siongco (SBMA), Baby dela Ilana (Tender Touch Enterprise), Jean Verzosa (Subic Park Hotel), Maan del Rosario (By The Sea Resort), Sonny Almazan (Zambales Tourism Council), Charles Davis (Seahorse Tours and Souvenirs), Eloy Pineda III (Inter-island Travel and Tours), Jhun Fernandez (DFS) and Thomas Lee (Grande Island Resort).

DEFINING VALUABLE COMMITMENT



Located in Door No. 5, GGO Summit Bldg., Dacudao Ave., corner Vinzon St., Davao City and established May of last year, Atlas Copco Davao immediately took lead over competition for the local market share. Companies choose Atlas Copco equipment for its proven track record of reliability and efficiency. Atlas Copco is the provider of utility equipment for most of Davao's cement manufacturing, packaging, hospitals, mining, fishing and canning industry players to name some. Photo shows (from left): Noel Apurada, Gen. Santos/Zamboanga area sales engineer; Vic Enojo, Davao area sales engineer; Jonnie F. Regis, CT general manager; Percival Bualat, Mindanao Business Development manager; Jheana Soronio, branch secretary; and Rudy Sumalpong, service engineer at the Atlas Copco (Phils) Inc Davao Office.

BUILDING A BRIDGE TO THE FUTURE

ACS ACS Training Academy -
MOA Signing Ceremony
2, 2007 at De La Salle

Advanced Contact Solutions and De La Salle (Lipa) recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding to build the first ever ACS Training Academy in Lipa City. ACS president and CEO Victor M. Endaya and La Salle executive vice president Juan Lozano are seen shaking hands to symbolize the commitment of both institutions to the continuing education of the Philippine youth. This facility will provide world class facilities and connectivity which will be made available to students who wish to improve their communication skills and proficiency.

SPORTS

Big 2nd quarter helps Spurs go up, 2-0

SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS—TIM DUNCAN HAD **26 points and 14 rebounds as San Antonio broke open a close game in the second quarter in posting a 105-96 win over Utah in game two of the Western Conference finals on Tuesday.**

France's Tony Parker had 17 points and a career playoff-high 14 assists and Manu Ginobili also scored 17 points for San Antonio, which set a team playoff record with 13 three-pointers.

"They are a tough team and they are not going to give up," Duncan said. "They play from the beginning to the end but we will take the lead"

San Antonio will look to take a commanding 3-0 lead on Saturday in Utah.

Duncan, who connected on 10-of-15 from the floor and also added five blocks, had his 11th consecutive playoff game with at least 20 points and 10 rebounds.

The nine-time All-Star leads all active players with 23 20-point, 10-rebound postseason efforts.

Since the 1998 playoffs—Duncan's first—Spurs are 11-1 all-time when they take a 2-0 lead in a series.

The only negative was a Western semifinal loss in six games to the Los Angeles Lakers.

San Antonio opened the second quarter on a 16-7 run to build a two-point first-quarter lead to 42-31 with 5:24 left in the half.

Ginobili had five points in the burst and Parker added four.

"We kept shooting ourselves in the foot," said Jazz coach Jerry Sloan. "They took advantage of our inability to see what is going on."

After Deron Williams cut the Jazz deficit to 52-41 with 1:44 remaining, the Spurs ended the period on a 6-0 spurt, capped by a shot from the arc by Barry, giving them a 58-41 halftime lead.

San Antonio made five-of-eight three-pointers in the quarter.

Ginobili, Michael Finley, Bruce Bowen and Brent Barry all made three three-pointers for the Spurs, who finished 13-of-26 from the arc.

The previous record was 12 against the Sacramento Kings in game two of the 2006 Western Conference first round.

San Antonio was in control throughout despite a strong game by Carlos Boozer, who rebounded from a 20-point, seven-of-17 performance in game one, to finish with 33 points and 15 rebounds.

Portland No. 1

In New York, the Portland Trail Blazers won the right to select the first pick in the 2007 entry draft.

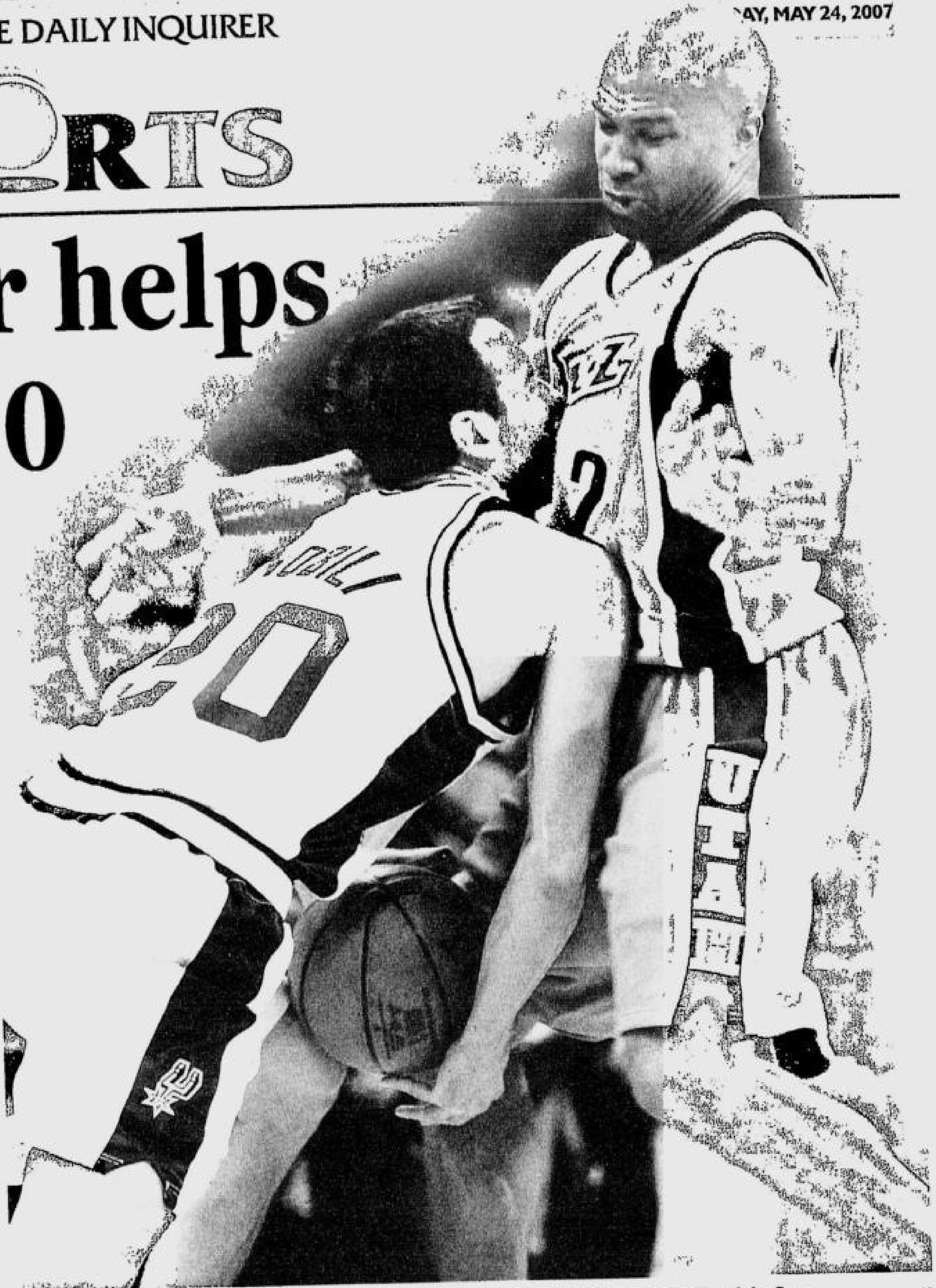
The Trail Blazers had just a 5.3 percent of getting the No. 1 pick and will possibly use it on highly touted Greg Oden in next month's draft.

The Blazers sent 2006-2007 Rookie of the Year Brandon Roy to the draft as their team representative, and the young shooting guard had a big smile on his face at the prospect of adding college basketball's best center to his team.

"I hope I bring them some luck," Roy said. "This is huge for our franchise. There are so many players who would be great for us."

The second pick went to the Seattle Supersonics, who likely will select Texas' Kevin Durant. The consensus college Player of the Year last season, Durant likely will replace All-Star Rashard Lewis.

Oden fell just short of leading Ohio State to the national championship as a freshman. The Buckeyes lost to Florida, which became college basketball's first back-to-back national champions since Duke in 1991 and 1992. *AFP*



IN THE end, it was Derek Fisher and the Jazz who ran into a brick wall, not Manu Ginobili and the Spurs. AP

Yao gets 'Dream' workout

HOUSTON—AS LONG AS HE PLAYS FOR THE Houston Rockets, Yao Ming will always be compared to Hakeem Olajuwon. He might as well turn to "The Dream" for advice.

Yao worked out with Olajuwon at the Toyota Center on Tuesday, the cornerstone of the Rockets' future getting his first lesson from the greatest center in franchise history.

"For a young player, how many people get this chance?" Yao said. "I'm the honored one of those."

The 44-year-old Olajuwon is the National Basketball Association's career leader in blocked shots (3,830) and led the Rockets to their only two championships in 1994 and '95.

The reclusive Olajuwon sat next to team owner Les Alexander during the Rockets' loss to Utah in Game 7 of their first-round playoff series. Afterward, Yao eagerly accepted Olajuwon's offer to practice with him.

Olajuwon worked with Yao for about 90 minutes, picking apart Yao's post moves and giving him pep talks along the way.

"How do you dominate the game?" Olajuwon asked his attentive protege. "You are hardworking, you have the conditioning, you have the shots. You have everything. Now, you have to dominate."

Olajuwon showed off a few of his old moves, too, dropping in some baseline jumpers and jump hooks as easily as he did 10 years ago.

Yao hopes Olajuwon's killer instinct rubs off on him, too. By the end of their practice, Yao felt like it had.

"The biggest difference between him and me is the mentality," Yao said. "He's got two championship rings. I can hear very strongly from him, 'You are the biggest player on the court. You need to go in and change the game. You need to be dominant.' He repeated that time and time again. I feel a little bit different. I feel his heart." *AP*

Noted Cuban coach returning

By Dennis U. Eroa, *Libre sports editor*

BARRING ANY LAST-MINUTE HITCHES, Cuban coach Raul Fernandez Liranza is arriving at the end of the month to help the national boxing team.

"Señor Liranza is coming to town. This time, it's for real," said Manny T. Lopez, president of the Amateur Boxing Association of the Philippines.

Lopez explained that Liranza failed to arrive last year due to a previous commitment with the famed Cuban national team.

"To be very precise, Liranza is one of the top Cuban coaches," Lopez explained. "His expertise helps the Cubans continue to dominate the sport worldwide. This is the reason why some Cuban officials are adamant to let him go."

Lopez added that his counterpart, Jorge Guzman Soccara of the Cuban Boxing Federation, had finally assured him of Liranza's stint.

"In his (Soccara) letter, he told me that everything is prepared for Raul's comeback," said Lopez, who like the Cuban is a ranking official of the International Amateur Boxing Association.

Liranza is not a newcomer to the Philippine boxing team. Regarded as a disciple of the new style of Cuban coaching, Liranza handled the Philippine national team from 1995 to 2000.

Lopez said Liranza will boost the country's bid to end its Olympic gold-medal drought in the Beijing Olympics.

"There's is no doubt in my mind that Raul is going to infuse new technique to our training," Lopez said. "Coupled with a competent local coaching staff headed by Pat Gaspi, our boxers will be in good hands."

Gaspi, an army sergeant, and assistant coaches Nolito "Boy" Velasco and Olympian Ronald Chavez masterminded the country's two-gold campaign in the 2006 Doha Asian Games.

The local coaches said Liranza is a welcome addition to the team.

"Raul is part of the team. He is not new to us," said Gaspi. "I'm sure, our boxers will learn a lot from him."

'I was drugged,' writes Foreman on classic loss to Ali

NEW YORK—FORMER WORLD heavyweight boxing champion George Foreman claims his water was drugged before he lost to Muhammad Ali in their 1974 "Rumble in the Jungle" at Zaire in his new book.

Foreman told ESPN on Tuesday that he was certain he was drugged because his water had a medicine-like taste, as if someone had spiked it to weaken him before the epic fight, which he lost to Ali by eighth-round knockout.

"I said, 'This water tastes like it has medicine in it,'" Foreman said he told trainer Dick Sadler before the fight. Sadler assured him it was fine, Foreman claimed. "I know there was medicine in that water. I'll never forget that.

"There was even worse medicine waiting in that ring—Muhammad Ali."

Foreman pounded Ali in early rounds but tired and was vulnerable when Ali counterattacked, the infamous "Rope A Dope" strategy.

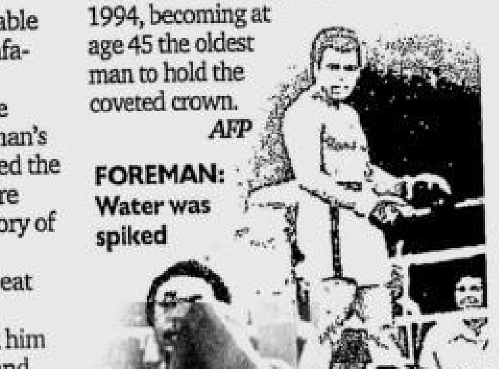
Foreman said he has made the drugging claim before but Foreman's promotion of the book has pushed the topic into the limelight once more even as he tries to uphold the glory of Ali's victory.

"It wasn't a fixed fight. I got beat fair and square," Foreman said.

But Foreman also said it took him years to recover from the fight and that he was lucky not to have died.

"It was years before I got my health back together after that fight," said Foreman. "It wasn't doctors who put something in my water."

Foreman returned from retirement to reclaim the heavyweight throne in 1994, becoming at age 45 the oldest man to hold the coveted crown. *AFP*



FOREMAN: Water was spiked

La Salle, UE gain Filoil tilt q'finals

By Romina S. Austria

LA SALLE AND UNIVERSITY OF THE EAST crushed separate foes yesterday to barge into the quarterfinals of the Filoil-Flying V Preseason Invitational Cup at The Arena in San Juan.

La Salle, with all but one of 14 players fielded in by coach Franz Pumaren contributing, overpowered University of the Philippines, 72-56, to become the first quarterfinalist in Group B.

UE joined Jose Rizal University in the Group A quarterfinals with a 98-78 rout of University of Santo Tomas in the second game.

The Green Archers, who were led by slotman Rico Maierhoffer's 12 points and 10 rebounds, improved to 4-1.

The Maroons slumped to a 1-4 slate but are still in contention for the remaining two quarterfinals slots in Group A.

The Warriors outclassed the Tigers in the other match, leading by as many as 22 points, 57-35, at the start of the second half when Raffy Reyes sank a triple.

UE is unbeaten in four games, a game behind idle Group A leader JRU, while UST, despite relegation to the Group B cellar at 1-4, still has a slim chance of advancing to the next phase.

Lady Stags test Lady Pirates

GAMES TODAY (The Arena)
1 p.m.—Ateneo vs UST
3 p.m.—Lyceum vs San Sebastian
5 p.m.—Adamson vs La Salle

SAN SEBASTIAN COLLEGE GETS TO TEST whether Lyceum of the Philippines is for real when the NCAA back-to-back champion battles the seven-time WNCAA winner today in the 4th Shakey's V-League women's volleyball tournament at The Arena in San Juan.

The SSC spikers, who disposed of Letran College on opening day, tangle with the leading Lady Pirates at 2 p.m.

University of Santo Tomas meets Ateneo in the 1 p.m. opener while defending champion La Salle takes on Adamson at 5 p.m.

Lyceum, behind Shella Marga, guest player Josielyn Degorostiza and team captain Sherrilyn Carrillo, assumed the solo lead after successive victories over Ateneo and Letran but will face its first real test against San Sebastian, which has won 20 NCAA titles since 1975.

Import Jaroensri Bualee and Laurence Ann Latigay and Rysabelle Devanadera will again carry the fight for SSC.

Organizers are allowing each squad to bring in one reinforcement—a former team member or anybody it can recruit. *Romina S. Austria*

Ravina new leader; Baguio stages next

From page A21

two minutes behind lap winner Sherwin Carrera, who broke free in the final 25 kilometers to win the 213-km stage from Laoag to here in 5 hours, 7 minutes and 30.10 seconds.

"I am happy because this is the first time (in my career) that I will wear the yellow jersey," the ever-smiling Ravina, who was banned from joining last year after trying out with another cycling faction, said in Filipino.

"I'll see what I can do (in the next two stages in Baguio) because I am not that great as a mountain specialist," Ravina added.

The feared mountain experts like Victor Espiritu, Lloyd Reynante and defending champion Santy Barnachea all tried to mount a breakaway but couldn't shake off each other.

"It doesn't matter anymore, tomorrow there will be no more guarding," the 31-year-old Barnachea, who remained 10 seconds behind Espiritu in seventh overall, told the INQUIRER in Filipino.

"It will be a battle of our strengths and nothing else."

This year's winner will be more or less known after the 80-km grind from this bustling town to Baguio today, where the 93 surviving cyclists traverse Marcos Highway all the way to the chilly summer capital.

Barnachea later revealed that Quirimit, prior to the start of the race, had told him that he was fagged out after ruling the fourth stage to grab the yellow jersey from Espiritu.

And it showed in the way Quirimit rode. He checked in more than 13 minutes behind the lap winner and ahead of just 24 riders to drop to fifth overall, now 2:24 adrift.

Comebacking Enrique Domingo, the newspaper boy and a veteran of many tours, was second for the day, 1:46 behind, and jumped to 13th in the standings, 7:05 off.

Obscure names actually dominated the first four places in the overall race, with Cossack Vodka skipper Renato Sambrano now the new second placer, just 29 seconds off, after arriving together with Ravina.

Cossack teammate Irish Valenzuela, last year's top rookie, advanced to third after riding side by side with Sambrano. He is 1:03 off the pace, 48 seconds ahead of the fourth-placed Emelito Atilano, who was 2:50 behind for the day.

Feliciano, meanwhile, kissed his hopes goodbye after figuring in a nasty spill in Sinait town in Ilocos Sur and dislocating his right collarbone.

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- **UK firm investing** $1.3B in biodiesel plants /B4

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BUSINESS

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DTI-listed investments up 194%

In first 4 months, firms commit up to P73.3B for 234 projects

By Ronnel W. Domingo

INVESTMENTS REGISTERED WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF Trade and Industry in the first four months increased 194 percent to P73.3 billion.

According to Trade Secretary Peter B. Favila, this development can only mean that the country is "still one of the best" destinations in Asia.

DTI data show that the Board of Investments and the Philippine Economic Zone Authority approved incentives for a total of 234 projects from January to April.

These projects are expected to create a total of 42,742 new jobs.

Projects from the manufacturing sector accounted for the biggest share of inflows at P39.04 billion, while mass housing projects rang up P12.65 billion. Power generating firms registered P10.85 billion in investments while information technology services accounted for P6.06 billion.

The manufacturing sector grew by 239 percent from the P11.52 billion registered in the same period last year. Mass housing doubled from last year's P6.34 billion, while IT services expanded by 95 percent from P3.11 billion.

As for mining, DTI gave perks to one project—the P1.22-billion nickel project of Berong Nickel Corp. in Palawan.

Foreigners committed 58 percent of total approved investments—at P42.45 billion—during the period, while locals earmarked a total of P30.88 billion.

The top three sources of investments were the United States, P24.04 billion; Japan, P8.98 billion; and, The Netherlands, P3.67 billion.

In April alone, 57 projects worth

DTI-LISTED/ B2

PHILIPPINE BPO/IT- SERVICES FORECAST

REVENUES	2004	2005	2006	2010
Customer care	1,024	1,792	2,680	5,296
Back office	120	180	288	2,392
Medical transcription	42	70	98	1,708
Legal transcription	4	6	9	36
Other data trans	26	39	52	169
Animation	52	74	97	759
SW Devt (export)	170	204	272	1,275
Engineering design	34	48	68	357
Digital content	3	7	13	208
REVENUES $ MILLION	**1,474**	**2,419**	**3,457**	**12,199**

(SOURCE: BOI-CICT-BPA/P)

Contact centers to take back seat in BPO boom

By Daxim L. Lucas

(First of two parts)

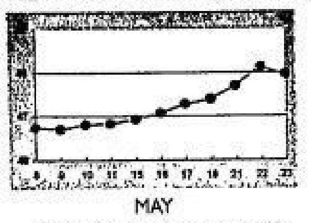
BY ALL MEASURES, THE COUNTRY'S call center industry is still booming.

Around Metro Manila and in a growing number of provincial locations, new contact centers are being put up, while existing ones are being

CONTACT/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



MAY

PESO-DOLLAR RATE

P 46.04 = $ 1

As of 5 p.m., May 23, 2007

Shares close 1.1% lower

SHARE PRICES YESTERDAY CLOSED 1.1 percent lower, bucking the trend in most major bourses in Asia, as investors cashed in on a seven-day record-breaking rally, dealers said.

The main index hit new record highs early in the session, but profit-taking set in to bring the index back to below the record-breaking 3,500-point level, they said.

The composite index gave up 38.47 points to close at the day's low of 3,466.56. It hit a new high of 3,517.13.

The broader all-share index fell 13.35 points or 0.6 percent to 2,221.12.

There were 57 decliners and 51 ad-

SHARES/ B2

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ADB plans to offer peso bonds yearly

Peso seen hitting 44:$1

STANDARD CHARTERED BANK, the oldest foreign bank in the country, sees the peso rising further to about 44:$1 given a "good" election turnout and a "frothing" domestic economy.

In an interview, Philippine Stanchart CEO Eugene Ellis said the British bank was keen on expanding its business in the country—such as through a foray into small and medium enterprise (SME) and mortgage lending—to take advantage of opportunities.

"All the fundamentals are excellent," Ellis said at the sidelines of the Asian Development Bank's P5-billion local bond float signing on Tuesday.

After breaking into the 45:$1 level to hit its highest in nearly seven years on Tuesday, Ellis said: "We see it going (into) another big figure."

He agreed that the currency would extend its gains toward the 44:$1 level before succumbing to some technical correction. "The fundamentals are all in place for the Philippines and we must seize the opportunity," Ellis said.

As of yesterday, the peso retreated from Tuesday's 45.87:$1, closing at 46.04:$1 yesterday. But currency traders said strong foreign buying at the local stock market as well as the heavy foreign exchange inflows from overseas Filipino workers ahead of the school openings in June continued to support the peso.

The slight pullback at the Philippine Dealing System yesterday was widely expected as the US dollar had hit oversold levels in the past few days, traders said.

In the meantime, the Stanchart executive said the bank would stick to its strategy of wholesale lending in the Philippines, citing its participation as lead arranger to the ADB's P5-billion peso bond float.

He said Stanchart was expecting to arrange about three more financial deals of about the same size within this year. Asked whether corporate demand for loans was now picking up after years of sluggish growth, Ellis said: "Absolutely. There are large corporations going to the market and there are a few more coming up."

Stanchart is also awaiting the launch of a centralized credit bureau in the country to be able to venture into SME lending. *Doris C. Dumlao*

Optimism due to substantial progress in RP bond market

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK, THE first triple A-rated global issuer of peso-denominated bonds, has noted rapid progress in the local bond market since it first ventured into it two years ago.

The ADB, which has doubled its latest peso bond offering to P5 billion from the level in 2005, has committed to make the local currency-denominated issuance a yearly exercise.

The P5-billion five-year bond float, arranged by British bank Standard Chartered and the Metrobank group's investment banking unit, First Metro Investment Corp., carried a fixed rate of 5.23 percent per year and is priced at a spread of 31 basis points over the tax-adjusted five-year Philippine treasury bonds.

"The fact that the size of our issue is double our inaugural issue reflects the improved liquidity in the market, and the clear evidence of that is the order book which was well oversubscribed by 1.4 times," ADB assistant treasurer Juan Limandibrata told reporters late Tuesday.

He said this was part of the ADB's ongoing effort to contribute to bond market development in the region.

"It's our strategy to maintain a regular presence in the market where we issued our bonds. We hope we can issue once a year, depending on the market, but from our perspective, P5 billion is a good size and good enough for the current stage of Philippine bond market development," Limandibrata said.

If the local capital market would further grow, he said ADB would increase its bond floats accordingly.

"From our perspective, the Philippine bond market has progressed very rapidly. I think the liquidity in the government bond market has improved significantly thanks to the work of Treasurer Omar Cruz and we were able to use that improved liquidity in pricing our bonds," the ADB executive said.

Via bond exchange initiatives, the government has weeded out dormant securities and replaced them with bonds to boost liquidity in actively traded tenors.

Asked what further reforms the ADB would like to see, Limandibrata said: "I think going forward, we would like to see more accessibility to different types of issuers as well as improved secondary market liquidity, especially in the corporate bond market."

Since early 2004, the ADB has completed market-opening transactions in the region's local currency bond markets, including India, Malaysia, People's Republic of China and Thailand. The proceeds of this issue will be part of ADB's ordinary capital resources and will be used in its nonconcessional operations.

Cargo shipping to grow by 10%

By Riza T. Olchondra

THE LOCAL CARGO SHIPPING INDUSTRY may grow by 10 percent this year if the domestic economy would grow by 6 percent, an official of international shipping giant A.P. Moller-Maersk said, citing historical trends.

"The rule of thumb is that the industry grows at twice the growth rate of the economy it serves," Sune Stilling, Maersk's senior general manager for marketing, communication and branding for Southeast Asia, told reporters on Wednesday.

"So if the local economy grows 5 percent, then we can expect around 10-percent growth for the container shipping market."

Jesper Dalgaard Larsen, the newly appointed managing director for Maersk-Filipinas, said the main sectors served by Maersk in the Philippines were the banana and halal food industries in Mindanao, furniture in Cebu and garments in Cebu and Manila.

The officials said Maersk was optimistic on the Philippine market not only because of the growing demand for products and the country's good trade ties with other nations, but also because of the government's efforts to improve infrastructure and logistics.

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Monitoring of ports duty collection tightened

By Michelle V. Remo

CUSTOMS COMMISSIONER NAPOLEON Morales has issued a customs special order requiring a monthly evaluation of the revenue-collection performance of all major ports in the country.

The move is intended to ensure that the BOC, the second-biggest revenue contributor among line agencies following the Bureau of Internal Revenue, would hit its P228.1-billion revenue target for the entire year.

Under CSO No. 10-2007, customs deputy commissioners were given their assigned ports to monitor.

"The order is expected to improve accountability and increase collection performance of district collectors all over the Philippines," Morales told reporters.

Customs Deputy Commissioner Reynaldo Umali—who is tasked to oversee the revenue collection performance of the ports of Subic, Batangas and Legaspi—said the deputy commissioners would be given the flexibility to recommend measures that would improve collection in the ports assigned to them in case these were having difficulty meeting their respective collection targets.

Umali said the evaluation of ports by the deputy commissioners started this month.

The 15 major ports in the country are San Fernando Port, Port of Manila, Manila International Container Port, Ninoy Aquino International Airport, Batangas Port, Legaspi Port, Port of Iloilo, Port of Cebu, Port of Tacloban, Surigao Port, Cagayan de Oro Port, Zamboanga Port, Port of Davao, Subic Port and Clark Port.

The move to intensify monitoring of the revenue collection performance in the country's ports followed the BOC's recording of collection shortfall in the first four months of the year.

In January to April this year, the BOC collected P57.419 billion in duties and nonduty revenues, which was short of the target collection of P64.99 billion for the four-month period.

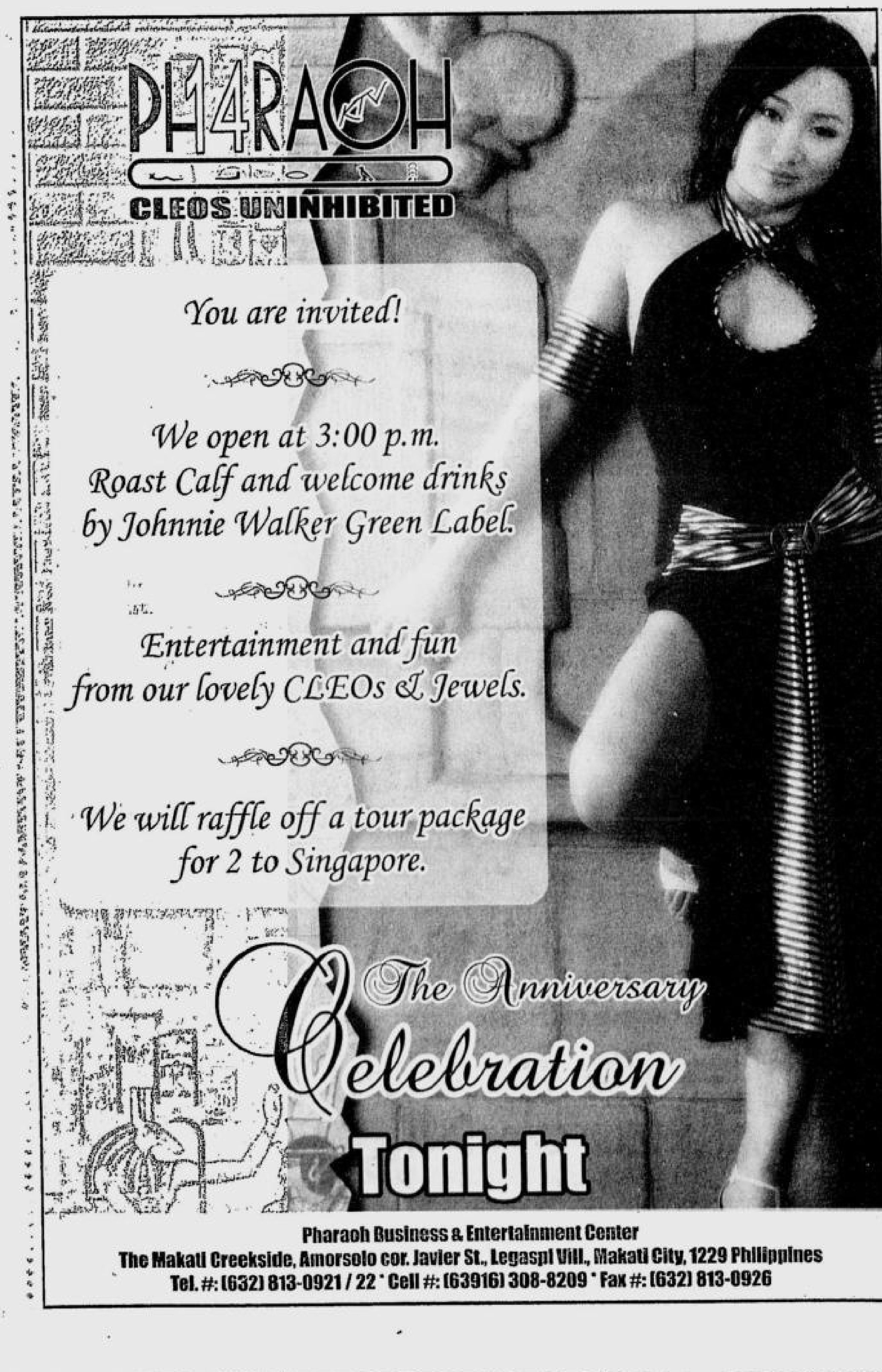
This was partly attributed to macroeconomic and external factors such as the appreciation of the peso, the decline in the importation of oil products and other goods.

Umali said the BOC would also tap other nonduty sources of revenues to help ensure it would meet its collection goal.

He said the BOC would run after the liabilities of customs bonded warehouses, which was hoped to generate P3 billion in additional revenue for the government.

Umali said about P2 billion would be generated by the BOC if it would be able to collect all the liabilities of CBW operators.

The BOC also expects to raise P1 billion more from the lifting of the 30-percent retention rate previously enjoyed by CBW operators.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Contact centers to take back seat …

From page B1

expanded as more large clients from abroad take advantage of Filipinos' English skills.

More importantly, allied service industries continue to make a killing as call center agents—most of them awake at ungodly hours—spend their wages on food, consumer electronics, and entertainment.

But emerging trends from within the industry reveal that the landscape is changing.

Demand for non-traditional services

While demand for English-speaking, "accent-neutral" call center agents will always be there, leaders and research data from the business process outsourcing (BPO) industry show that the bulk of the growth and revenues in coming years will come from other segments not considered traditional Filipino strengths.

It comes as no surprise, therefore, that some of the largest players in the industry are now working double time to provide services that provide more value than just the usual order-taking or help desk activities that call centers have long been known for.

"The outsourcing industry is still a high growth industry, but we now do end to end [BPO activities]," Accenture's outsourcing group chief executive Kevin M. Campbell said, responding to queries about changes in the local call center business.

"We're always focused on differentiation and we're not a commodity player," he said. "If people feel that [the industry] is topping out, then they have a commodity service."

To fortify its unique service offerings from other call centers, Accenture spent $700 million on training around the world last year, and plans to further increase its training budget this year for its outsourcing businesses in the Philippines and in India.

Locally, it conducts 37 training courses each week in its eight facilities, which already house over 10,000 BPO agents.

Call center growth disappoints

Beyond just relying on speaking "correct" English, the investment in training would become even more important for Accenture and other contact center firms in the coming years, according to the local industry's umbrella organization.

Data from the Business Processing Association of the Philippines (BPAP) showed that there were 160,000 agents employed with various contact centers nationwide.

This is equivalent to 67 percent of all 237,175 workers employed by the wider BPO industry, which includes operations like back office operations, medical transcription, legal transcription, animation, and software development, among others.

If all goes well, BPAP expects the number of call center workers in the country to balloon to 331,000 by 2010, representing a growth rate of 106 percent.

This doubling of the call center population looks ambitious and impressive, but pales in comparison with the growth rates expected for the other segments of the industry.

Another boom area

The number of people employed in back office work, for example, is expected to grow to 299,000 by 2010 from the present headcount of of only 36,000—a growth rate of 730 percent.

The medical transcription business is another boom area, with the growth rate expected to top 1,600 percent from now until 2010, and the employee headcount rising from only 7,000 to 122,000.

By 2010 therefore, call center agents will make up only one-third of all workers in the BPO industry from the present-day level of two-thirds. *(To be continued)*

DTI-listed investments …

From page B1

P32.69 billion were listed—an increase in value of 581 percent compared to the same month last year. Most projects were related to manufacturing and IT services, which are to be located in the export zones and IT parks of Peza.

"The first four months' performance is a strong manifestation that investors' confidence remains strong due to the positive reforms the government has undertaken, notwithstanding the May midterm election," Favila said.

Trade Undersecretary Elmer C. Hernandez, who is also BOI head, said mass housing continues to attract major investments, aimed at helping the government address the housing backlog now pegged at 1.4 million units.

Hernandez also noted that most of the investments in the power sector went to renewable and environmentally clean technologies.

Shares close 1.1% lower

From page B1

vancers, while 54 stocks were unchanged.

A total of 9.3 billion shares worth P8.4 billion ($186.6 million) changed hands.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. fell P80 to P2,470.

Food and beverage firm San Miguel Corp.'s A-shares retreated two pesos to P67, while its B-shares were also down two pesos at P75.

AFP

Tech firm to raise P300M

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY company ISM Communications Inc. said it would raise P300 million from a planned stock rights offering next month.

ISM said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE) that it would sell 30 billion shares at one centavo a share.

ISM is offering shareholders one rights share for every one common share held as of the record date tentatively set on June 8.

ISM will use the proceeds from the rights offer to invest in telecommunication assets and buy additional shares in Eastern Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (ETPI), where it has a majority stake.

The proposed offer period will run from June 20 until 29.

ISM, headed by Roberto Ongpin, took over control of ETPI in 2005 following its purchase of the 40-percent stake of Australia Gigahertz Network International Pty. Ltd.

With that purchase, ISM beefed up its stake in ETPI to 57.7 percent.

ISM had a banner year in 2006, after ETPI reported P701 million in revenues and a P31-million profit for 2006.

ETPI's turnaround in 2006 after six years of losses, which in 2005 hit P540 million, was driven mainly by massive cost savings program, corporate reorganization, restructuring of overdue loans and settlement of vendor claims and dividend income from ETPI's investment in a cable ship operator.

Philweb Corp. of former Trade Minister Roberto Ongpin owns 13.28 percent in ISM, records with the PSE showed.

Another company Boerstar Co., with Ongpin registered as a beneficial owner and stockholder, holds 16 percent in ISM.

PANGANIBAN

Panganiban joins GMA 7

FORMER CHIEF JUSTICE ARTEMIO PANGANIBAN has joined broadcasting leader GMA Network Inc. as independent director.

Panganiban has been elected to the GMA board, which includes chair Felipe L. Gozon, Gilberto R. Duavit Jr., Joel Marcelo G. Jimenez, Judith R. Duavit-Vazquez, Anna-Teresa M. Gozon-Abrogar, Felipe S. Yalong, and Laura J. Westfall.

Panganiban was the chief justice of the Supreme Court from 2005 to 2006.

He also served as the chair of the Presidential Electoral Tribunal, the Judicial and Bar Council and the Philippine Judicial Academy.

Before becoming the Chief Justice, Panganiban served as Supreme Court Justice from 1995 to 2005.

He was also the chair of the Supreme Court's Third Division as well as the House of Representatives Electoral Tribunal from 2004 to 2005.

Panganiban authored many books including two volumes of "Liberty and Prosperity" in 2006, "Judicial Renaissance" in 2005, "Leveling the Playing Field" in 2004, "The Bio-Age Dawns on the Judiciary" in 2003, "Reforming the Judiciary" in 2002, "A Centenary of Justice" in 2001, "Transparency, Unanimity and Diversity" in 2000, "Leadership by Example" in 1999, "Battles of the Supreme Court" in 1998, "Justice and Faith" in 1997, and 'Love God, Serve Man" in 1994.

Panganiban currently writes a column for the Philippine Daily Inquirer and is also an adviser, consultant and/or an independent director of several business, civic, nongovernment and religious groups. *Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of May 23, 2007)

52-WEEK HIGH	52-WEEK LOW	STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
		BANKS					
17.5	5	Asiatrust Development Bank Inc.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	17,400
73	42.5	Bank of the Philippine Islands	69.5	70.5	69	70.5	3,727,000
71	30.5	Banco de Oro Universal Bank	69	71	69	70	3,243,900
935	630	China Banking Corp.	910	910	910	910	240
20	18.18	Citystate Savings Bank	19.75	19.75	19.75	19.75	400
124	60	Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	122	124	119	120	271,220
0.63	0.36	Export and Industry Bank Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	1,360,000
68.5	29	Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co.	66.5	68.5	66.5	68	10,662,200
55	30.5	Philippine National Bank	48	48	47.5	48	107,900
68	38.5	Philippine Savings Bank	64	64	63	64	11,100
39.57	13.04	Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.	32	32.5	31.5	32	4,655,700
90	41	Security Bank Corp.	82.5	82.5	81.5	81.5	585,800
65.77	40.55	Union Bank of the Philippines	64	64.5	64	64.5	222,400
		OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS					
0.85	0.6	Bankard Inc.	0.65	0.66	0.65	0.66	330,000
7.7	1.5	CitisecOnline.com Inc.	7	7.1	7	7.1	2,342,000
0.8	0.4	First Abacus Financial Holdings Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	50,000
5	4.15	National Reinsurance Corp. of the Phils.	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.45	12,069,000
2.4	0.97	PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.	2.38	2.38	2.38	2.38	111,000
1,005.00	200	The Philippine Stock Exchange Inc	600	600	585	585	1,320
2,250.00	1,895.00	Sun Life Financial Inc.	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	2,110.00	360
1.94	1.07	Vantage Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.7	1.72	1,508,000
		ELECTRICITY, ENERGY, POWER & WATER					
63.5	41	First Gen Corp.	62.5	63.5	59	59.5	3,848,600
82.5	40.5	First Phil. Holdings Corp.	81	81	80	80.5	3,853,900
12.75	6.6	Manila Water Co. Inc.	12	12	11.75	11.75	582,200
96	13	Manila Electric Co. "A"	94	96	92	92.5	314,000
97	20.25	Manila Electric Co. "B"	95	97	92	92.5	4,477,700
6.8	4.1	PNOC Energy Development Corp.	6	6.1	5.9	6	62,784,000
5.7	3.35	Petron Corp.	5.4	5.4	5.2	5.4	15,272,000
1.62	0.89	Trans-Asia Oil and Energy Dev't Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.46	1.46	835,000
		FOOD, BEVERAGE & TOBACCO					
5.9	2.85	Alaska Milk Corp.	5.5	5.5	5.3	5.3	433,000
2.95	1.88	Alliance Tuna International Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.14	2.16	785,000
28.5	19.5	Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	26	26.5	25.5	25.5	33,000
61	30	Jollibee Foods Corp.	55	55.5	55	55	1,988,600
6.8	3.5	Pancake House Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	10,000
1.62	0.69	RFM Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	1,456,000
4.05	2.34	Roxas Holdings	2.4	2.4	2.34	2.34	96,000
80	61	San Miguel Corp. "A"	69	69	67	67	86,700
88	68	San Miguel Corp. "B"	76	76.5	74.5	75	128,600
0.51	0.2	Swift Foods Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	10,000
22	15.5	Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	15.5	15.75	20,086,800
		CONSTRUCTION INFRASTRUCTURE AND ALLIED SERVICES					
5.7	1.07	EEI Corp.	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.5	1,573,000
4.5	1.06	Fortune Cement Corp.	4.3	4.3	4.2	4.2	3,000
9.2	4.2	Holcim Philippines Inc.	8.7	8.7	8.6	8.6	8,154,000
2	0.245	Southeast Asia Cement Holdings Inc.	1.82	1.82	1.8	1.8	1,029,000
		CHEMICALS					
6.1	[illegible]	[illegible]	6.1	[illegible]	6.1	[illegible]	[illegible]
		DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS					
0.11	[illegible]	[illegible]	0.11	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]
		HOLDING FIRMS					
4.05	1.7	A. Soriano Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.6	3.6	1,078,000
0.0925	0.022	AJO.net Holdings Inc.	0.075	0.0775	0.0725	0.0725	77,500,000
0.97	0.17	APC Group Inc.	0.88	0.91	0.84	0.91	82,870,000
0.018	0.005	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "A"	0.012	0.013	0.012	0.013	1,017,800,000
0.019	0.0065	Abacus Cons. Res. and Hold'gs Inc. "B"	0.012	0.014	0.012	0.014	264,300,000
9.7	4.85	Aboitiz Equity Ventures Inc.	9.3	9.4	9.2	9.2	7,602,000
0.017	0.0065	Alcorn Gold Resources Corp.	0.015	0.017	0.015	0.017	893,200,000
7.3	3.5	Alliance Global Group Inc.	6.5	6.5	6.4	6.5	2,653,000
1.04	0.45	Alsons Consolidated Resources Inc.	0.82	0.83	0.82	0.83	180,000
2.26	0.83	Anglo-Philippine Holdings Corp.	2.14	2.14	2.12	2.14	2,006,000
566.67	272.92	Ayala Corp.	525	535	520	520	376,840
14	7.92	Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc.	13.75	13.75	13.5	13.75	125,000
6.9	0.7	Balabac Resources and Holdings Co. Inc.	4.55	4.55	4.55	4.55	8,000
4.75	0.97	Benpres Holdings Corp.	4.65	4.75	4.5	4.6	50,313,000
9.2	3.25	DMCI Holdings Inc.	9	9.1	8.7	8.7	5,335,000
6	2.55	Filinvest Development Corp.	5.5	6.5	5.4	5.4	934,000
3.55	1.14	House of Investments Inc.	3.2	3.3	3	3.05	1,562,000
14.5	5.3	JG Summit Holdings Inc.	11.75	11.75	11.5	11.75	645,500
13.25	0.88	Magnum Holdings Inc.	12	12	11.75	11.75	59,500
4.55	0.19	Multitech Investments Corp.	4.2	4.2	4.1	4.15	604,000
5.4	1.2	PAL Holdings Inc.	3.7	3.7	3.6	3.65	217,000
1.26	0.8	Prime Media Holdings Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	10,000
0.57	0.155	Prime Orion Philippines Inc.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.52	8,480,000
1.8	1.2	Republic Glass Holdings Corp.	1.64	1.64	1.64	1.64	83,000
442.5	205	SM Investments Corp.	440	442.5	437.5	440	265,720
2.2	0.6	Seafront Resources Corp.	1.76	1.76	1.76	1.76	132,000
0.67	0.115	Sinophil Corp.	0.57	0.61	0.57	0.59	109,030,000
0.85	0.51	Solid Group Inc.	0.72	0.72	0.71	0.71	200,000
1.46	0.68	South China Resources Inc.	1.34	1.46	1.34	1.46	1,930,000
0.24	0.08	Wellex Industries Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.17	5,120,000
		PROPERTY					
2.16	0.75	A Brown Co. Inc.	1.76	1.78	1.76	1.78	2,502,000
0.58	0.3	Araneta Properties Inc.	0.47	0.47	0.47	0.47	50,000
16	8.54	Ayala Land Inc.	15.75	15.75	15.5	15.75	38,574,200
1.72	0.95	Belle Corp.	1.6	1.64	1.6	1.6	16,223,000
3.9	1.18	C and P Homes Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.65	3.8	2,561,000
4.7	1.8	Cebu Holdings Inc.	4.55	4.6	4.55	4.55	110,000
2.1	1	Cebu Property Venture and Dev't Corp. "B"	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	125,000
2.9	1	Cityland Development Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.7	2.7	3,000
0.58	0.24	Crown Equities Inc.	0.55	0.56	0.55	0.55	3,550,000
0.50	0.165	Cyber Bay Corp.	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	6,630,000
0.31	0.14	EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.25	0.28	0.25	0.26	2,640,000
3.1	0.64	Edsa Properties Holdings Inc.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	20,000
0.99	0.44	Empire East Land Holdings Inc.	0.81	0.82	0.8	0.82	20,750,000
0.27	0.027	Ever Gotesco Resources and Hold'gs Inc.	0.22	0.235	0.22	0.23	46,920,000
1.12	0.38	Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.81	0.86	0.81	0.84	16,230,000
2.04	0.93	Filinvest Land Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.94	1.98	54,941,000
0.016	0.0038	Interport Resources Corp. "A"	0.012	0.013	0.011	0.012	57,500,000
0.016	0.005	Interport Resources Corp. "B"	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	2,000,000
0.69	0.2	Kuok Phil. Properties Inc.	0.41	0.42	0.41	0.41	3,870,000
0.99	0.18	MRC Allied Industries Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.72	0.72	940,000
4.25	1.26	Megaworld Corp.	4.1	4.1	4	4.1	79,959,000
6.4	1.5	Metro Pacific Investments Corp.	4.45	4.5	4.45	4.5	22,000
0.26	0.1	Phil. Estates Corp.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	3,300,000
0.87	0.25	Philippine Realty and Holdings Corp.	0.61	0.61	0.61	0.61	1,930,000
23	9.6	Robinson Land Corp.	19.5	20.25	19.5	20	15,740,800
5.2	1.23	SM Development Corp.	5.2	5.2	4.95	4.95	1,562,000
13	6.9	SM Prime Holdings Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12	4,447,500
0.96	0.51	Suntrust Home Developers Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	1,050,000
0.27	0.06	Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.23	0.235	0.225	0.225	6,080,000
1.74	0.3	[illegible] Realty Holdings Inc.	1.32	1.32	1.24	1.3	361,000
		MEDIA					
32	13.5	ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	31.5	32	31	32	385,800
1.14	0.97	Manila Bulletin Publishing Corp.	1	1	1	1	12,000
		TELECOMMUNICATIONS					
2.12	1.1	Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.	1.6	1.6	1.58	1.58	8,360,000
1,445.00	820	Globe Telecom Inc.	1,360.00	1,360.00	1,350.00	1,350.00	185,380
2,820.00	1,700.00	Phil. Long Distance Telephone Co.	2,520.00	2,520.00	2,470.00	2,470.00	119,280
7.9	3.1	Pilipino Telephone Corp.	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.7	2,198,000
		INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY					
0.39	0.155	Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.27	0.27	0.26	0.26	[illegible]
9	2	Diversified Financial Network Inc.	9	9	8.9	8.9	9,000
7.6	2	IPVG Corp.	7.2	7.2	7.1	7.2	1,575,000
0.075	0.046	ISM Communications Corp.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	3,800,000
0.033	0.011	Imperial Resources Inc. "A"	0.027	0.027	0.027	0.027	3,800,000
2.9	1.78	Ionics Inc.	2.2	2.2	2.18	2.18	243,000
0.0675	0.038	Island Information and Technology Inc.	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	0.0575	2,100,000
1.84	1.12	Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.46	1.48	1.46	1.48	159,000
0.06	0.027	PhilWeb Com Inc	0.05	0.05	0.049	0.05	104,800,000
5.8	1	Transpacific Broadband Group Int'l. Inc.	2.08	2.1	2.04	2.04	1,343,000
		TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
1.88	1.14	Aboitiz Transport System Corp.	1.74	1.8	1.74	1.8	402,000
6.8	2.5	Asian Terminals Inc.	6.2	6.2	6	6.1	1,052,000
32	12.5	Int'l Container Terminal Services Inc.	28.5	30	28.5	29	6,089,100
2.14	0.86	Keppel Philippines Marine Inc.	1.94	1.94	1.94	1.94	1,000
		HOTEL & LEISURE					
4.25	1.26	Leisure and Resorts World Corp.	4	4	3.9	3.95	1,570,000
5	2.7	Manila Jockey Club Inc.	5	5	5	5	95,000
0.64	0.18	Premiere Entertainment Productions Inc.	0.55	0.58	0.55	0.57	1,390,000
1.2	0.42	Waterfront Philippines Inc.	0.96	1	0.96	0.98	5,540,000
3.7	2.65	iPeople Inc	3.15	3.2	3.15	3.15	53,000
		DIVERSIFIED SERVICES					
18	6.6	JTH Davies Holdings Inc.	12.75	12.75	12.75	12.75	14,000
4.5	1.84	Macroasia Corp.	4.3	4.4	4.3	4.4	2,114,000
16.75	13	Pacific Online Systems Corp.	16	16.75	16	16	3,534,700
30	9.5	Paxys Inc.	26	26.5	26	26	1,210,000
80	22	Prime Gaming Philippines Inc.	80	80	80	80	1,000
		MINING					
0.018	0.007	Abra Mining and Industrial Corp.	0.013	0.013	0.012	0.013	108,100,000
7.6	2.6	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "A"	6.4	6.5	6.2	6.4	1,094,000
7.7	2.55	Apex Mining Co. Inc. "B"	6.6	6.6	6.6	6.6	279,000
21.25	5.6	Atlas Cons. Mining and Dev't Corp.	20	20	19.5	20	3,668,100
14.25	8.7	Benguet Corp. "A"	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.5	34,000
2.24	0.0602	Geograce Resources Philippines Inc.	2.1	2.16	2.06	2.16	25,437,000
0.35	0.215	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "A"	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	730,000
0.42	0.225	Lepanto Consolidated Mining Co. "B"	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	5,150,000
0.038	0.0154	Manila Mining Corp. "A"	0.038	0.038	0.036	0.037	172,600,000
0.041	0.017	Manila Mining Corp. "B"	0.04	0.04	0.039	0.039	93,700,000
0.024	0.0075	Omico Corp.	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.021	982,200,000
6.1	2.65	Philex Mining Corp.	5.7	6.1	5.6	6	202,403,000
30	14.75	Semirara Mining Corp.	26.5	27.5	26.5	27.5	68,100
0.87	0.25	United Paragon Mining Corp.	0.81	0.81	0.79	0.8	1,670,000
1.8	0.41	Vulcan Industrial and Mining Corp.	1.48	1.58	1.46	1.56	57,085,000
		OIL					
0.58	0.23	Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.43	0.45	0.43	0.44	13,070,000
0.02	0.008	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "A"	0.02	0.02	0.019	0.02	503,800,000
0.021	0.009	Oriental Pet. and Minerals Corp. "B"	0.02	0.021	0.02	0.021	411,700,000
14.62	9	Petroenergy Resources Corp.	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	34,200
0.024	0.0089	The Philodrill Corp.	0.022	0.024	0.022	0.024	3,469,500,000

BY INQUIRER RESEARCH

SOURCE: TECHNISTOCK

CURRENCIES

May 23, 2007 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.743384	1.000000	45.9920
Japan	Yen	0.006115	0.008226	0.3783
United Kingdom	Pound	1.468332	1.975200	90.8434
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.095025	0.127827	5.8790
Switzerland	Franc	0.604770	0.813537	37.4162
Canada	Dollar	0.684515	0.920810	42.3499
Singapore	Dollar	0.485650	0.653296	30.0464
Australia	Dollar	0.610031	0.820614	37.7417
Bahrain	Dinar*	1.971893	2.652590	121.9979
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.198225	0.266652	12.2639
Brunei	Dollar	0.484069	0.651169	29.9486
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000115	0.0053
Thailand	Baht	0.022629	0.030441	1.4000
UAE	Dirham	0.202474	0.272368	12.5267
EU	Euro	1.000000	1.345200	61.8684
Korea	Won	0.000799	0.001075	0.0494
China	Yuan**	0.097115	0.130639	6.0083
ArgentinaPeso	0.242066	0.325627	14.9762	
Brazil	Real	0.383504	0.515889	23.7268
Denmark	Kroner	0.134180	0.180499	8.3015
India	Rupee	0.018520	0.024913	1.1458
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219547	0.295334	13.5830
Mexico	New Peso	0.068932	0.092727	4.2647
New Zealand	Dollar	0.540604	0.727220	33.4463
Norway	Kroner	0.122924	0.165358	7.6051
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012239	0.016464	0.7572
South Africa	Rand	0.105337	0.141699	6.5170
Sweden	Kroner	0.108796	0.146353	6.7311
Syria	Pound	0.014321	0.019264	0.8860
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.022261	0.029945	1.3772
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000346	0.000466	0.0214

Source: Reuters' forex closing prices as of NY time—May 22, 2007
* Various banks in Bahrain as quoted in Reuters' Screen
** Asian time closing rate as of May 22, 2007

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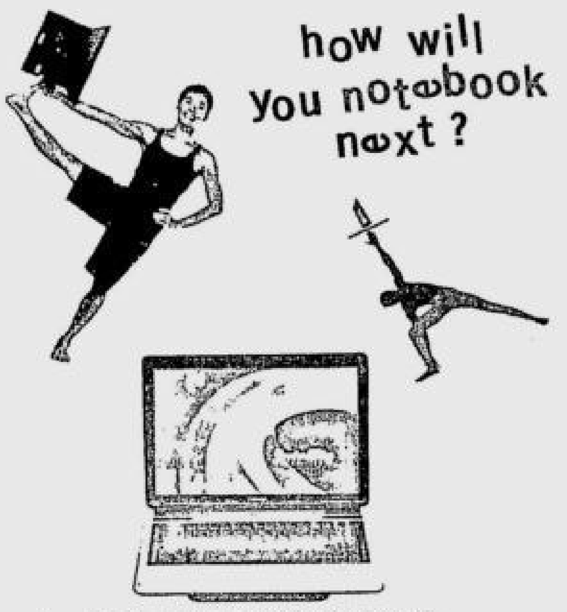

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Joint venture with PNOC-AFC likely to be formed

By Abigail L. Ho

BRITISH FIRM NRG CHEMICAL Engineering Pte. Ltd. has signed a memorandum of understanding with PNOC Alternative Fuels Corp. (PNOC-AFC), committing to infuse more than $1.3 billion into the country's biofuels industry in the next five years.

Under the deal, NRG and PNOC-AFC would form a joint venture that would be 70-percent owned by NRG and 30-percent owned by the local partner.

NRG would put up a 350,000-MT bio-refinery within the year. Of the $47 million needed to construct the plant, 30 percent will come from PNOC-AFC, establishing its participation in the joint venture.

This bio-refinery would not only be able to produce biodiesel, but would also churn out polyols, which could be converted into biopolyurethane and polyurethane.

These materials can be used to produce environment-friendly biodegradable plastics.

For the succeeding bio-refineries, funding would come fully from NRG.

Chris de Lavigne, vice president at NRG corporate advisor Frost and Sullivan, said the first plant would likely be located with the PNOC-AFC Industrial Park in Bataan.

To produce feedstock for the planned bio-refineries, NRG would bankroll the establishment of more than 1 million hectares of jatropha plantations in different areas all over the country.

De Lavigne said these would mostly be located in Mindanao, where there are "lots of land and the weather is good."

While waiting for its jatropha production to reach commercial scale, he said NRG would be using local coconut and possibly other vegetable oils as feedstock for the first bio-refinery.

After 12 to 18 months, there should be enough jatropha from its plantations to supply the bio-refinery's feedstock needs, he said.

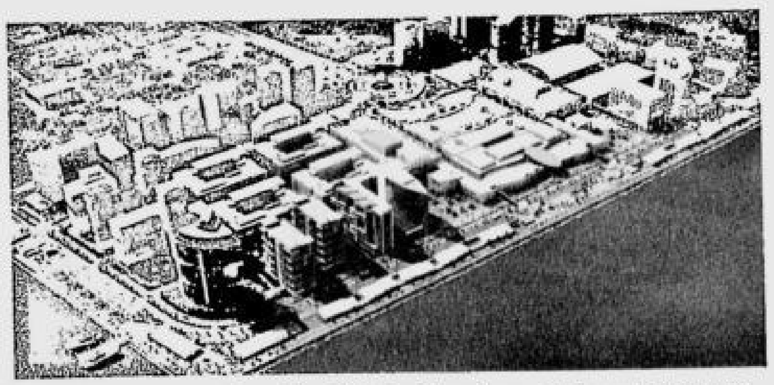
Apart from the bio-refineries and the jatropha plantations, NRG would also invest $200 million for the construction of two ethanol plants with an aggregate capacity of 300,000 MT.

Instead of being sold as fuel bioethanol, however, he said the ethanol refineries' output would be used in the biodiesel refining process—ethanol being a key component in the technology that NRG used in the production of biodiesel and other bio-materials.

In all these projects, the MOU said PNOC-AFC would be given a 30-percent free-carry ownership, with no liabilities or other financial obligations.

"(The Philippines) is extremely proactive towards putting into place biofuels policies. These projects require government support," De Lavigne said. "With regard to jatropha, the Philippines has the land and the weather, so it's an ideal location."

The establishment of biofuels facilities in the country would also help it achieve its goal of 60-percent energy self-sufficiency by 2010, he added.



An artist's perspective of the SM BayCity where Carlson Hotels Asia Pacific will develop a 350-room hotel. SM BayCity is envisioned to become the country's premier business and tourism district.

SMIC inks hotel deals with Accor, Carlson

SM INVESTMENTS CORP., THE holding company of the SM Group, recently signed a memorandum of understanding with top international hotel firms Carlson Hotels Asia Pacific and Accor.

Under the deal, the two hotel companies will develop and manage SMIC's prime properties in SM BayCity in Pasay, Metro Manila and Cebu City, respectively.

Carlson Hotels Asia Pacific will develop and manage the 350-room property in SM BayCity, situated at the coast of Manila Bay. It will be located near the SMX Convention Center.

The 400-room property in Cebu City, located right next to the SM City Cebu Mall, will be developed and managed by Accor. The hotel's facilities will include a majestic lobby, food and beverage outlets, a grand ballroom that can accommodate 1,000 persons and 10 meeting facilities, a business center and recreation facilities.

Carlson Companies are the global leader in the marketing, travel and hospitality industries. The names of the Carlson family of brands include Regent Hotels & Resorts, Radisson Hotels and Resorts and the Park Plaza Hotels & Resorts.

With nearly 4000 hotels worldwide, Accor is the European leader in hotels and the global leader in corporate services. Sofitel, Novotel and Grand Mercure are among of the brands of Accor.

Insurers owe gov't P8B in unpaid taxes

By Michelle V. Remo

INSURANCE COMPANIES OWE the government some P8 billion worth of unpaid taxes.

The Insurance Commission said that based on an initial evaluation of their financial statements, insurance firms underpaid their premium tax payments by P8 billion over a five-year period ending 2006.

"We (Insurance Commission) are going to review this thoroughly and we will cooperate with the Bureau of Internal Revenue. We will suspend the licenses of those proven not paying proper taxes," Insurance Commissioner Evangeline Escobillo said in a briefing yesterday.

Escobillo said the estimated deficiency in premium taxes paid was determined by comparing the amount of premiums collected by insurance firms from 2002 to 2006 with the amount of premium taxes paid. Insurance premiums are levied a 5-percent tax.

The move of the Insurance Commission to look into the tax compliance of insurance companies was prompted by a request by the Bureau of Internal Revenue and its mother agency, the Department of Finance.

The DOF earlier said there was a need to investigate the accuracy of tax remittances by insurance firms in view of the drop in premium tax collection last year and in the first quarter of this year.

The BIR reported that in 2006, its premium tax collection reached only P1.68 billion, or 31.5 percent lower than the 2005 level.

This, the DOF said, could be due to tax delinquency by insurance companies. The agency noted that the tax collection went down while these companies reported substantial income growth.

Data from the Insurance Commission showed that total premiums collected by the industry hit P73.29 billion in 2006, up 15 percent from the P63.55 billion recorded in the previous year.

AEV to spend P9.6B for expansion this year

By Elizabeth Sanchez-Lacson

ABOITIZ EQUITY VENTURES IS spending P9.6 billion this year for the expansion of its power, food, banking and transport businesses, company president Jon Ramon Aboitiz said.

Aboitiz said the company could use for the expansion program some P8 billion in cash, which includes proceeds from the sale of the firm's treasury stocks worth $121 million.

Aboitiz did not provide details of the capital expansion but said it was for the overall working capital of its units.

He told stockholders during their meeting yesterday that the company would look for opportunities to expand its power distribution businesses through acquisitions of other distribution utilities in economic zones such as those in Cebu and Bataan.

AEV's distribution utilities also concluded agreements with the National Transmission Corp. for the acquisition of all sub-transmission assets within their franchise areas.

In the banking business, Unionbank will continue to look for opportunities to attain its goal to be one of the top banks by 2010.

Aboitiz said there was nothing on the table right now in terms of new acquisitions after Unionbank's purchase of International Exchange Bank.

Groups dare Pfizer to drop suit vs gov't

TWO NONGOVERNMENT ORGANIZATIONS have dared multinational drug firm Pfizer to drop its suit against two government agencies for alleged patent infringement "since the firm has lost its moral right over the issue."

The groups Ayos na Gamot sa Abot Kayang Presyo (Agap) coalition and the Cut-the-Cost Cut-the-Pain Network (3CPNet) said the recent United States Court of Appeals' ruling invalidating the patent of Pfizer over the drug amlodipine besylate "puts under serious question any and all claim by this drug firm of intellectual property rights over the treatment."

Amlodipine besylate is sold worldwide under the brand name Norvasc. Pfizer slapped the government with the patent infringement suit last year following attempts by the Philippine International Trading Corp. (PITC) to import cheaper versions of Norvasc from India and other Asian countries.

The groups said they had undertaken legal action in the country to have Pfizer's Philippine patent on Norvasc similarly voided. This will open the door for the manufacturing of cheaper generic versions of the drug which is used as anti-hypertension treatment.

They also protested earlier the high price tag for the Pfizer product.

GOINGS-ON

BOC bags Megalink award

BANK OF COMMERCE (BOC) RECEIVED THE "HIGHEST HOST AVAILABIlity Award for 2006" from Megalink Inc., in a ceremony held recently at the Intercontinental Hotel in Makati City. The bank posted the highest availability rate of 99.82 percent among member banks while its ATM host computer averaged a downtime of only 2.6 minutes per day, the citation said.

Asia's top FX house cited

DEUTSCHE BANK CONTINUES TO BE THE LARGEST FOREIGN EXCHANGE trading bank in Asia as well as globally, according to the definitive annual global market share survey conducted by capital markets publication, Euromoney.

According to the 2007 survey, which gathers information from over 8,650 institutional and corporate foreign exchange clients globally, Deutsche Bank is Asia's leading FX trading house with a 21.74-percent market share—an increase of 3.52 percent from 2006 level. UBS finished in second place.

Deutsche Bank accounts for 19.3 percent of the global FX market, ahead of UBS and Citigroup.

CEB-Bench partnership

CEBU PACIFIC, THE COUNTRY'S LEADING DOMESTIC CARRIER, HAS teamed up with Bench, a leading Filipino apparel brand, for the provision of the airline's uniforms for both ground and cabin crew.

The new uniforms will be rolled-out in June 2007.

The agreement governing the partnership was signed by Cebu Pacific product manager Apple Gregorio, vice president for marketing Candice Iyog, Bench marketing manager Kristine Lim and product manager Helen de los Santos.

Outstanding employer named

TELETECH, THE IARGEST AND FASTEST-GROWING BUSINESS PROCESS outsourcing company in the Philippines, was cited by the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) as "Outstanding Employer" during the recent Peza Investors Night at the World Trade Center.

The award was given to TeleTech in recognition of its sustainable and growing investments in the country, and its commitment to the welfare of employees.

TeleTech's world-class facilities, dynamic working environment and exceptional career development program, made it one of the most successful BPO companies in the country.

PIA-Adtek deal

ELECTRONIC DISPLAY SYSTEM OR ELECTRONIC BOARDS THAT ARE USED TO relay information to commuters and the public, will soon be put to use in the country.

Secretary Conrado A. Limcaoco Jr. of the Philippine Information Agency (PIA) recently signed an agreement with Adtek Innovations Asia Corp. president and chief executive officer Eduardo A. Javier for the installation of at least 25 EDS stations in key points in Metro Manila.

Patterned after EDS network in other countries, these electronic boards are intended to help ease traffic in Metro Manila and provide the public with news and information such as weather and currency exchange.

PHILRICE PHILIPPINE RICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

1. The Philippine Rice Research Institute, through the Government of the Philippines in collaboration with Bill Gates Foundation intends to apply the sum of FIVE MILLION FIFTY-EIGHT THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED TWENTY-FIVE PESOS AND 00/100 ONLY (PhP 5,058,725.00) being the approved budget for the contract for Public Bidding 07-02-007. Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.
2. The Philippine Rice Research Insitute now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for the SUPPLY & DELIVERY OF VARIOUS LABORATORY EQUIPMENT. Delivery of Goods is required within sixty (60) to ninety (90) days after receipt of the approved Purchase Order. The description of an eligible bidder is contained in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB.
3. Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures using non-discretionary pass/fail criteria as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act" and is restricted to Filipino citizens or organizations of a country the laws or regulations of which grant similar rights or privileges to Filipino citizens, pursuant to Republic Act 5183 (R.A. 5183) and subject to Commonwealth Act 138 (C.A. 138). Only Bids from Bidders who pass the eligibility check will be opened. The process for the eligibility check is described in Section II of the Bidding Documents, ITB. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine responsiveness of the bid to technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated and Responsive Bid (LCRB) who was determined as such during the post-qualification procedure.
4. Interested bidders may inspect the Bidding Documents and obtain further information from PhilRice located at Brgy. Maligaya, Science City of Munoz, Nueva Ecija during office hours from 8:00 to 5:00 p.m.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by interested Bidders on May 22 to 25, 2007 during regular office hours from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of FIVE THOUSAND PESOS AND 00/100 ONLY (Php 5,000.00). The method of payment will be in form of cash. The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective bidder or his authorized representative.
6. PhilRice will hold a pre-bid conference open to all interested parties on May 29, 2007; 2:00 p.m. at PhilRice, Training Rm. 3, Laboratory Bldg., Maligaya, Science City of Munoz, N.E.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be submitted to the BAC thru the Supply Office on or before the 5th of June, 2007, 1:45 p.m. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, Manager's Check or Cashier's Check payable to PhilRice equivalent to one (1%) percent of the ABC or Fifty Thousand Five Hundred Eighty-Seven Pesos and 25/100 only (PhP 50,587.25). Late bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be on June 5, 2007, 2:00 p.m. at Training Room 3. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who choose to attend.
9. PhilRice reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and to reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(Sgd.) HAZEL JANE M. ORGE
Chairman, Bids & Awards Committee

(PDI – May 19 & 24, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR AND EMPLOYMENT
National Capital Region
DY Int'l Bldg., 1650 San Marcelino
cor. General Malvar St., Malate, Manila

NOTICE OF FILING OF APPLICATION/S FOR ALIEN EMPLOYMENT PERMIT/S (AEP/S)

Notice is hereby given that the following companies/employers have filed with this Regional Office application/s for Alien Employment Permit/s:

Name and address of Company/Employer	Name of Foreign National	Position
DELFI FOODS INC. No. 23 M. Tuazon St., Parang, Marikina City	Niels Hendrik Bernhard Have	General Manager
SUMISETSU PHILIPPINES, INC. 146 Valero St., Salcedo Vill., Makati City	Takuro Suzuki	Division Manager
SYSTEM RENOVATION, INC. Unit 2703 PBCom Tower, Ayala Ave. cor. V.A. Rufino St., Makati City	Yasuhiro Nakagami	Member of the Board of Directors, President & Chief Executive Officer
SOLVWARE INTERNATIONAL, INC. Unit 1810 Cityland 10, Tower I, Ayala Ave. cor. H.V. dela Costa St., Makati City	Philip Carlton Donnell	Vice President for Operations
ALL OCEANS MARITIME AGENCY, INC. G/F Mary Bachrach Bldg., 25th St., Port Area, Manila	Sze Lam Cheng	Director
ME NIHONGO LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EXCHANGE, INC. 3/F A&M Bldg., 397 Binakod St., Olympia, Makati City	Kazue Uemura	Teacher
ME NIHONGO LANGUAGE AND CULTURE EXCHANGE, INC. 3/F A&M Bldg., 397 Binakod St., Olympia, Makati City	Suguru Moriguchi	Teacher
BMCO R & E INC. 1602 Antel Corp. Center, 121 Valero, Makati City	Min Chul Jang	General Manager
FPFK CORPORATION 65 Mindanao Ave., Pag-Asa I, Quezon City	Yangkeun Kim	Customer Relation Officer
TARGETTI PHILIPPINES, INC. Daan Manunuso cor. Elisco Road, Brgy. Tipas, Taguig City	Yongxing Fu	Product Development Engineer
DYCO 21 PHILS., INC. 2 Andres Cmpd., F. Legaspi St., Maybunga, Pasig City	Jung Wi Ryu	Technician

If you have any information/objection to the abovementioned application/s please communicate with the Regional Director.

LOURDES M. TRASMONTE
Regional Director

The DOLE conducts free seminar on Labor-Human Relations and Productivity. For more information, please call 339-2013 & 303-5920.

(PDI-May 24, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Education
REGION X - NORTHERN MINDANAO
Gregorio A. Pelaez, Sr. Memorial Sports Center
Velez St., Cagayan de Oro City

DepED

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Department of Education, Region X through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites prospective bidders (Cooperatives) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for

NAME OF PROJECT	:	Supply and Delivery of Elementary Tables & Chairs and Secondary Armchairs, and Teachers Tables and Chairs
ABC & FUNDING SOURCE	:	NINE MILLION ONE HUNDRED FOUR THOUSAND PESOS (P9,104,000.00) Funding Source is the Government of the Philippines CY 2006 GAA (15% Allocation for other Cooperatives of the DepEd Desk/ Armchair Project)
CONTRACT DURATION	:	One Hundred Twenty (120) Calendar Days
DELIVERY SITES	:	"Door to Door" delivery to various recipient schools (See Schedule of requirements of the Bidding Documents)

The project is divided into three lots, namely: Lot A – Elementary Table and Chairs (all wood) and Teacher's Table and Chair (all wood); Lot B – Elementary Armchairs for Grade 5 & 6 (all wood) and Teacher's Table and Chair (all wood); Lot C – Secondary Armchairs (all wood) and Teacher's Table and Chair:

The schedule of BAC Activities is as follows:

BAC ACTIVITIES	DATE AND TIME	VENUE
1. Availability of Bidding Documents	May 25-June 5, 2007	BAC Secretariat
2. Pre-Bid Conference	May 28, 2007	RO X Conference Room @ 2 pm
3. Receipt and Opening of Bids	June 11, 2007	Ro X Conference Room @ 2 pm

The Bidding Documents shall be available at the BAC Secretariat Office (Legal Unit), DepEd Region X, upon payment of non-refundable amount of Philippine Pesos Three Thousand Hundred Pesos Only (P3,000.00).

Bidding shall be conducted in accordance with procedures under the Implementing Rules and Regulations of R.A. 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act. Information is also available at http://www.philgeps.net/geps/ or call the Department of Education RO X @ 08822-72-78-36.

The Department of Education reserves the right to accept or reject any bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all bids at anytime prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected bidder or bidders.

(Sgd.) NONA A. ESTILO, CESO III
Director III/BAC Chairperson

(PDI – May 24, 2007)

US Fed official comfortable with current level of interest rates

NEW YORK—US INTEREST RATES are appropriate for the Federal Reserve to achieve its goals, but may need to be re-evaluated later this year, a top Fed official said on Tuesday.

The Fed has kept the benchmark federal funds rate steady at 5.25 percent since last June to bring inflation down as economic growth slows. But it has said that inflation remained its predominant concern.

Richmond Federal Reserve president Jeffrey Lacker, who is regarded as one of Fed's more hawkish officials, said he was comfortable with rates.

"The current funds rate has us on track to achieve what we want," he told reporters after a speech to the Money Marketeers of New York University. "So I'm comfortable with where the funds rate is now. But circumstances change later this year.

They will have to be re-evaluated."

Lacker, who is not a voting member of the US central bank's interest rate-setting committee in 2007, dissented at four consecutive Fed meetings last year in favor of another quarter percentage point rate hike.

Although he considers rates appropriate for now, he made plain in a CNBC interview earlier that inflation was a concern.

"Core inflation has been fluctuating between 2 and 2 1/2 (percent) for two years now, since April '04. Before that, from 1996 until 2003, core inflation went between 1 and 2 percent.

"We need to get back to containing core inflation between 1 and 2 percent," he told CNBC.

Core inflation strips out volatile food and energy prices to yield a more reliable measure underlying price pressures.

"The fact that inflation expectations seem to have risen as inflation has risen, and seem to be lodged around 2 percent, gives me a lot of concern," he said.

The National Association for Business Economics forecast the core personal consumption expenditures index (PCE)—the Fed's favored measure for underlying prices—would average 2.1 percent this year.

Fed chair Ben Bernanke, speaking in Washington, did not comment on the economy or interest rates in text prepared for an awards ceremony.

In his speech, Lacker said US economic growth should be below trend in the first half of 2007 before returning to trend by the end of the year.

Growth slipped to an annualized 1.3 percent in the opening three months of this year, its weakest pace in four years.

"The housing market is likely to find a bottom some time this year and no longer be a drag on top line growth, business investment will pick up, and consumer spending will remain healthy," he said.

Many economists think long-term US trend growth lies around 2.5 percent.

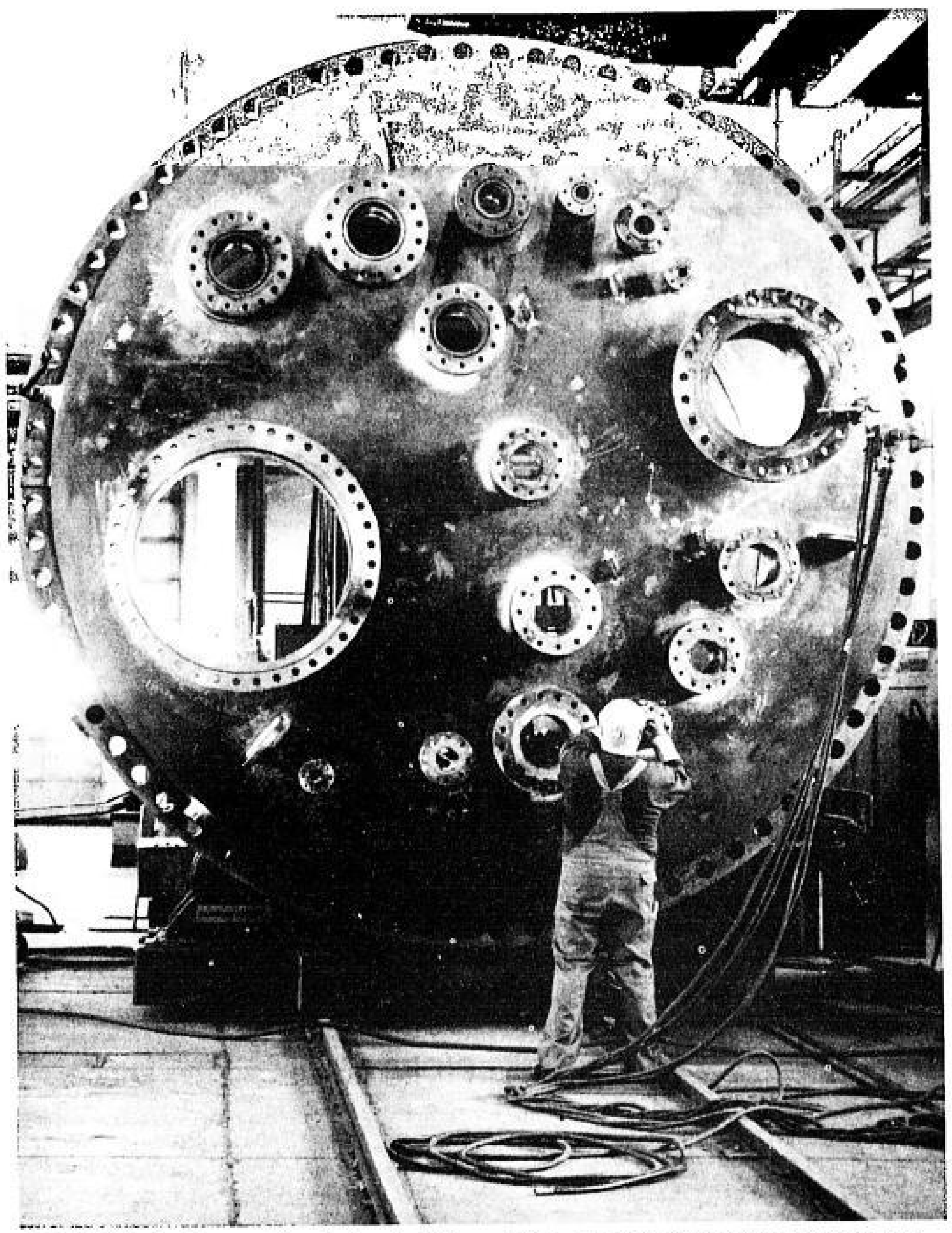
Lacker doubted high gasoline prices heading into the US summer driving season would change the growth outlook, but he said they could impact consumer inflation expectations.

"I am worried that there will be an uptick in inflation expectations as a result of retail gas prices going up, and that will get built into prices going forward," he said on CNBC.

He said in his speech that the inflation outlook hinged on policymakers' ability to influence inflation expectations.

Using interest rates alone to manage expectations would be difficult and time-consuming.

Reuters



A WORKER checks a part in a factory in Grimma. MWL, a maker of pressure containers for the petrochemical industry, is one of many companies hit by a shortage of engineers, which economists say is costing the resurgent German economy billions of euros. REUTERS

Asian shares up on banks

SINGAPORE—ASIAN STOCKS edged up yesterday as strong earnings forecasts boosted bank shares in Japan and South Korea, while exporters gained from a jump in the dollar to a three-month high against the yen.

Tokyo's Nikkei average closed just higher and an MSCI index of Asian shares outside Japan tiptoed to a fresh record peak.

Financial bookmakers expect Britain's FTSE 100 index to opening steady to 4 points lower.

The dollar held around a six-week peak against the euro on dwindling expectations that the US Federal Reserve will cut interest rates later this year after surprisingly strong data on housing and manufacturing.

The Nikkei booked a modest 0.14 percent advance as shares in Japan's top three banks extended gains on high hopes for higher profits.

Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc. rose 3.7 percent, Mizuho Financial Group Inc. jumped 5.5 percent and Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group Inc. advanced 5.4 percent.

Japan's banking sector rose 3.76 percent, taking back some of the 24 percent slide from a seven-year high in April 2006.

The sector fell on concerns about a legal crackdown at banks' affiliated consumer credit companies.

"The market has factored in the negatives, including the (consumer lender) problem, for banks," said Soichiro Monji, a strategist at Daiwa SB Investments.

Dollar at 3-mo high vs yen

The softer yen supported exporters such as Toyota Motor Corp. and tech firms, led by Advantest Corp.

Techs were also given a lift by a 0.36 percent rise in the US Nasdaq, which took the index to a six-year high on takeover talk in the gaming industry.

Expectations of stable earnings also helped Korean banks rebound from recent falls, as worries eased about shrinking net interest margins, a key profitability gauge in the sector.

Shinhan Financial Group rose 1.1 percent after Citigroup raised its share target price.

The main index marched to a record-high for the third straight day.

China's stock market rose 1.1 percent to extend its giddying record run.

Another report said Beijing was discussing a proposal to triple the stock market investment quota for foreign institutions to about $30 billion.

Analysts believe the authorities will let the market continue to rise and any cooling measures would be mild.

Worries about the pace of China's economic growth were eased by a senior government economist who said the economy was not showing the classic symptoms of overheating.

Hong Kong stocks eased 0.1 percent, but record demand from individual investors pushed Belle International Holdings, China's top women's shoe retailer, up more than 35 percent on its market debut.

Australian stocks rose 0.3 percent, helped by a rebound in top banks, including National Australia Bank Ltd., which gained 0.4 percent.

The generally firm tone in Asia pushed the MSCI's measure of Asia Pacific stocks excluding Japan to a fresh record high at 447.75.

The Dow Jones average closed flat on Tuesday after hitting an intraday record, while the broader Standard & Poor's 500 index was steady.

The dollar rose as high as 121.77 yen in Asia, its firmest level since Feb. 13, amid comments from a Fed official that backed the market's view the US central bank was not rushing to cut interest rates.

The euro held at $1.3456, near its six-week low of $1.3436 hit on Monday. The euro was up 0.15 percent at 163.65 yen, within reach of a record peak of 163.94 yen.

Market focus is now on any comments at the end of a two-day meeting between US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson and Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi in Washington on Wednesday.

Oil rose on worries of a worsening conflict between Iran and the West over Tehran's nuclear aims, but expectations of rising US gasoline inventories helped to keep gains in check.

Spot gold traded at $660.50/661.20 an ounce, above the $658.80/659.30 levels in New York, when it fell more than $3.

Reuters

US, China clash over reforms

WASHINGTON—FACING INCREASING pressure from lawmakers, the United States called on China Tuesday to step up economic reforms at high-level talks here, but Beijing cautioned Washington against politicizing trade relations between the two key powers.

US Treasury Secretary Henry Paulson, in his opening remarks at the two-day "strategic economic dialogue" meeting, underlined "persistent trade and financial imbalances" and sought prompt action from China to redress them, saying Americans were "impatient."

American concerns over a burgeoning trade deficit with the Asian giant are expected to eclipse the meeting as US lawmakers accuse Beijing of keeping its yuan currency grossly undervalued to make its exports cheaper—a key factor cited for the snowballing deficit that hit $232 billion last year.

The lawmakers have threatened to push ahead with legislation imposing sanctions on Beijing if the Chinese refuse to budge on making their currency more flexible.

"Our policy disagreements are not about the direction of change but about the pace of change," Paulson told Chinese Vice Premier Wu Yi and 15 of her Cabinet ministers attending the talks with an equally strong US delegation, including Federal Reserve chair Ben Bernanke.

Wu, the tough-talking Chinese leader, did not mince words in her opening comment.

"Politicizing trade and economic issues is absolutely unacceptable" and would "complicate the situation," warned the "iron lady" of China.

She also cautioned against what she called the danger of injecting politics into US economic and trade relations.

US-China trade relations, she said, should be viewed as part of a long-term strategic relationship and "attempts to politicize economic and trade issues should be resisted.

AFP

Oil rises ahead of US inventory data

SYDNEY—OIL PRICES ROSE ON Wednesday as some traders bet that US gasoline supplies would fall ahead of peak driving season, and as the market awaited an international body's report on Iran's nuclear program.

Benchmark London Brent rose 41 cents to $69.93 early yesterday afternoon.

It had fallen 97 cents to settle at $69.52 on Tuesday amid forecasts that the weekly US government storage report would show a build-up in crude and gasoline supplies.

US crude rose 15 cents to $65.66.

"There is no news driving up prices. (They) are rising because some traders are expecting gasoline stocks to fall and are taking positions," said Ryuichi Sato, from Mizuho Corporate Bank's derivative business unit.

US government stock data were due to be released late yesterday.

A Reuters poll of analysts has forecast that gasoline inventories rose by 1.4 million barrels last week, as refiners lifted production ahead of the Memorial Day holiday this weekend, which marks the start of the summer driving season.

Analysts said a report by the International Atomic Energy Agency on Iran's uranium enrichment program, due later on Wednesday, also offered support to prices.

"We know Iran hasn't complied with the conditions so the report is going to be a hawkish one," said Dariusz Kowalczyk, an analyst from Hong Kong-based CFC Seymour Ltd.

Atomic inspectors are expected to report on Wednesday that Iran has not only ignored an imminent UN deadline to stop enriching uranium but markedly expanded the program, exposing Tehran to broader sanctions.

Global oil supplies could also be threatened in the coming months as the Atlantic hurricane season approaches.

The US government's top climate agency predicted on Tuesday that the 2007 season would be more active than normal due to warmer ocean waters, forecasting as much as 10 hurricanes, of which three to five could be major .

The forecast is in line with those of other experts, who predict a busy season, after a quiet year in 2006 , reviving memories of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, which killed 1,300 people in New Orleans, slammed US offshore oil and gas platforms and shut coastal refineries, sending oil prices to a record high of $78.40.

Analysts said continuing turmoil in Opec member Nigeria, which pushed Brent prices to a nine-month high on Monday, was also casting a pall over the market.

Reuters

RICH GETTING RICHER

Wall St. pay on way up, study says

NEW YORK—ON WALL STREET, THE rich may get still richer.

Investment bankers may see bonuses and other incentive pay rise 10 percent to 15 percent from elevated 2006 levels, while gains may be 15 percent for traders and 20 percent or more for workers in private equity, according to a study by Johnson Associates Inc., a prominent compensation consultant.

Financial services are benefiting from growth in international operations, proprietary trading and derivatives, and as low borrowing costs fuel record buyout activity.

"Many firms are building international businesses and seeing more and larger deals there, including in Asia and Europe," said Zanvi Patel, a vice president at New York-based Johnson Associates, in an interview. "Lenders are (also) benefiting from a healthy economy and record highs in some equity indexes.

"Companies have to balance their interest in boosting shareholder returns with a need to pay the producers who generate them."

Not all will benefit equally, the study said.

Incentives may rise 10 percent for workers who serve wealthy clients and 5 percent to 10 percent in both asset management and commercial banking, the study said.

Retail banking employees may see gains of just 0 percent to 5 percent, as rising mortgage defaults crimp profit.

In 2006, incentive pay rose about 20 percent in investment banking; 12.5 percent to 15 percent in trading; 10 percent in asset management, commercial banking and high net worth; and 7.5 percent in retail banking, Johnson Associates said.

Bonuses for securities industry employees were projected last year to have risen 17 percent to a record $23.9 billion, according to a December estimate by former New York State Comptroller Alan Hevesi.

Incentives can comprise the bulk of compensation for top investment bankers and traders.

Their overall pay regularly reaches seven figures and occasionally eight figures.

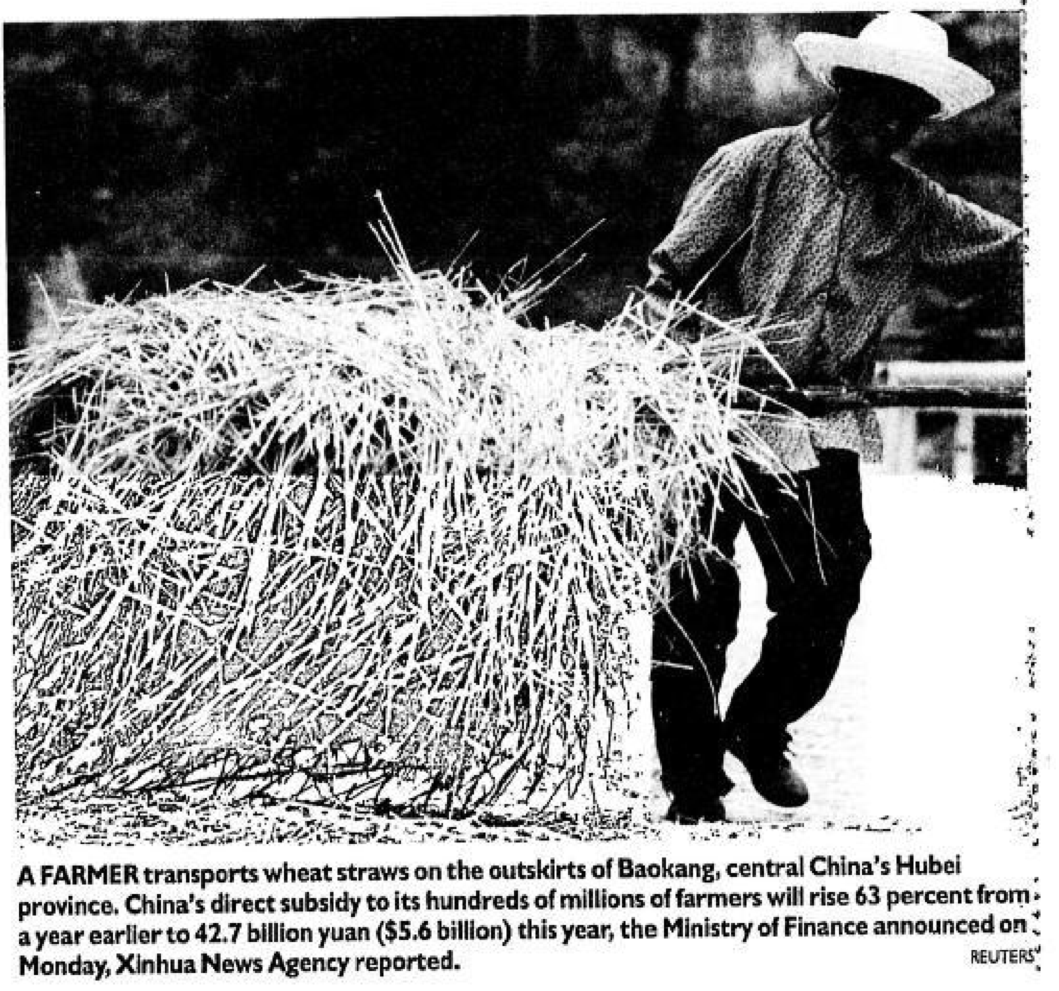
Several investment banking and trading specialists reported strong first-quarter results.

Trading gains helped Goldman Sachs Group Inc. and Morgan Stanley post record profits and helped Citigroup's investment banking and trading unit increase profit 36 percent.

Merger activity also remains strong, including a roughly $90 billion battle for Dutch bank ABN Amro Holding NV and buyouts led by Kohlberg Kravis Roberts & Co.'s planned $31.8-billion takeover of power company TXU Corp.

Goldman in April closed a $20-billion buyout fund, while Blackstone Group LP, a private equity firm preparing to go public, said it has raised $19.6 billion for its latest fund.

Reuters



A FARMER transports wheat straws on the outskirts of Baokang, central China's Hubei province. China's direct subsidy to its hundreds of millions of farmers will rise 63 percent from a year earlier to 42.7 billion yuan ($5.6 billion) this year, the Ministry of Finance announced on Monday, Xinhua News Agency reported. REUTERS

PICPA National Convention adopts the theme SYNERGY4value

The Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants, the accredited professional organization of CPAs in the country, at 77 seems to be aging gracefully and getting stronger than ever, staging one convention after another

The 61st Annual National Convention (ANC) may look more like a semi-annual convention, coming only half a year after the 62nd ANC; but this would be PICPA's only national convention for the year 2007, one of the effects of the organization's shift to fiscal year. In both conventions, the Visayas has taken the center stage.

This year's convention will be spearheaded by Andy Cabuyadao, the incoming National PICPA President from PICPA Isabela Chapter, as chair of the organizing committee.

After PICPA Cebu Chapter and Eastern Visayas Region's successful hosting of the 60st ANC in November comes the 61st ANC in Iloilo City that will be hosted by the PICPA Iloilo Chapter led by Albert Tuzan as President.

The first and so far the only PICPA ANC to be held in summer, the convention which may have been dubbed as a mini-convention, is packed with hot stuff from the first day to the last.

On Day 1-May 23 alone, the delegates organized their time well in order to get themselves registered, join the motorcade and courtesy call to local government officials, join the sports fest and attend the Business Opportunities Seminar. In the end, most delegates chose one activity over another.

The 2-day Annual Planning Conference kicked off yesterday at the Sarabia Manor Hotel. The 2007-2008 national, regional and chapter officers attended the conference. It will be capped with a fellowship, dubbed as Recuerdos de Ayer, at 6 p.m. on May 24 at Past PICPA National President Bobby Pison's residence.

On May 24, the convention participants will have a free time until the 4 p.m. Opening Ceremonies except for the CPAs in the education sector who will be busy in the Educator's Forum at 9 a.m. to 12 noon at the Central Philippines University (CPU).

In fiesta atmosphere, the 61st PICPA ANC will be formally opened at 4 p.m. with the usual processional of officers and chapter presidents. It will be keynoted by Former Pangasinan Governor Oscar Orbos.

A plenary technical session will follow. This will be a roundtable discussion on the topic "SYNERGY4value." The panel is composed of Josie Chua for Commerce and Industry Sector, Jaime Naranjo for Government, Arlyn Villanueva for Education, David L. Balangue for Public Practice and Francisco B. Gonzalez V for PICPA.

A fellowship dinner will be tendered for the delegates and guests at the football field of the Central Philippines University after the session. A mini Dinagyang festival will entertain them during the affair.

The whole day of May 25 will be devoted to technical sessions. Sessions for CPAs in Commerce and Industry, and Government will be held at the Iloilo Grand Hotel while those for CPAs in Education and Public Practice will be at the Sarabia Manor Hotel.

The regional and chapter awards will be presented to the outstanding chapters and regions at 6 p.m. at the Boardwalk, a party venue in Iloilo City. Regional presentations showcasing fiesta will also be the main event of the night.

On the last convention day, May 26, the convention delegates will surely be happy to take the short trip to the famous Tatoy's Seafood Restaurant for the plenary technical sessions, tax forum and closing ceremonies. Thereafter, the delegates will gather at the Sarabia manor Hotel for the thanksgiving mass at 5 p.m.

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ROJECT Messages

Warmest greetings to the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) as you hold your 61st PICPA Annual National Convention.

Accountants play a crucial role in ensuring the smooth flow of business and the efficiency of our public and private institutions. Over the years, the PICPA has worked for the advancement of the accounting profession in the country, while contributing immensely to our economic recovery efforts. And for that, you deserve our commendation.

Our national agenda is designed to move our country toward greater political stability, economic prosperity, and peace order. We are now focused on bringing the benefits of a strong economy to every Filipinos, even as we put in place the infrastructures needed to attract more investments, create more jobs and beat poverty. As active partners of government, I ask you to join me in our efforts to achieve at 7 - to 8 - percent growth rate in the next three years.

May you have a fruitful convention. Mabuhay kayong lahat.

(Sgd) GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President, Republic of the Philippines

It is my distinct pleasure to offer my best wishes to the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants on the occasion of your 61st Annual National Convention. We at the Professional Regulation Commission reiterate our support for PICPA as an outstanding professional organization and partner in nation building.

We welcome this worthy event as it draws the participation of over 1500 CPAs as well as participants. We encourage members and guests to participate with enthusiasm in this opportunity to renew their collegial comradeship in the accounting profession through the various social, sporting and academic events.

But more importantly, we encourage all participants in the conference to renew their commitment to practice the highest professional standards in accounting. By embracing this commitment, PICPA members demonstrate that their profession is an engine of growth and progress for our country.

Once more, my congratulations and best wishes for a successful and productive conference. Mabuhay kayong lahat!

(Sgd) LEONOR T. ROSERO
Chairperson, Professional Regulation Commission

On behalf of the Board of Accountancy, I would like to convey our warmest greetings and commendations to the organizers and participants of the Annual Convention of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants (PICPA) to be held on May 23-24, 2007 in Iloilo City

Your convention theme "Synergy 4 Value" is indeed very appropriate and timely. In this day and age, the world is no longer what it used to be. With the advent of the New Economy, there are higher demands for efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness. With barrier-free business and state of the art communication as pillars of globalization, the pace of the change has never been this fast. This current economic developments affecting the financial and corporate world calls for an accounting profession that is capable to respond to the needs of the times. As CPAs with a mission --- that of being the business world's most trusted advisors, it becomes necessary for all of us to be professionally competent. Moreover, we must continue to pursue what is right with compassion and dedication, strong sense of morality, independence and integrity. As wave after wave of advancements come our way, we must learn to ride at the crest and not at the bottom. Mastery over modernization is the only way we could stay afloat and achieve the extraordinary. This gathering serves as a good venue for addressing such concerns.

Please accept my best wishes for a fruitful and successful convention.

(Sgd) EUGENE T. MATEO
Chairman, Board of Accountancy

It is my greatest honor to welcome all PICPAns, delegates and participants to our 61st Annual National Convention, one of the anticipated and memorable events of our profession held on May 23-26, 2007 in Iloilo City.

This year, our convention is guided by the theme "SYNERGY4value" which captures the continuing thrust of the Institute to propel the Filipino CPA to his rightful place in the globe, as well as promote and advance the cause of the Institute and the profession. This year's convention focuses on the global and domestic issues affecting the public practice, commerce and industry, education and government sectors of our accountancy profession. It is our hope that every Filipino CPA in every sector will join us in this quest and positively respond to the call to be globally competitive and catalysts of change in leading our country to economic progress and stability.

In behalf of the Officers and Members of the 2006-2007 National Board of Directors, I would like to commend the men and women behind the 61st Annual National Convention for their commitment and all out support in making this year's convention a success.

Mabuhay Tayong Lahat!

(Sgd) MANUEL M. PASCUAL
National President, PICPA

Welcome to our 61st Annual National Convention!

On behalf of the organizing committee, I extend my warmest greetings and heartfelt gratitude to all the participants and distinguished guests.

The global environment introduced new business orders and practices, requires new skills and competencies, and imposed new regulations that every CPA has to adhere to. On its part, the Institute has to step up its aggressiveness in developing and implementing strategies and initiatives to assist the CPAs in the different sectors of the profession in coping with and adapting to the changes that remarkably changed his practice. The CPAs and the Institute must take fast and firm strides to avoid being pushed to the sidelines and be able to thrive and be at par with their counterparts in the globe.

This calls the CPAs and four sectors to integrate their acts, complement their efforts, and collaborate all in pursuit of one goal - to create more value for themselves, the Institute and the accountancy profession, as well as more value for their services. Thus, we adopted the theme, SYNERGY4value, for this convention. This simply musters the commitment of the CPAs and the four sectors to synergize. I strongly believe that we can draw more strength if we are one in advancing and realizing that one vision.

Again, thank you very much for joining us in this convention. We are more than glad to see you in Iloilo City. May this event serve as a venue for us to exchange experiences, and strengthen links for future cooperation and productive networking, as well.

God Bless us all!

(Sgd) ANDRES CABUYADAO
Chair, 61st PCIPA Annual National Convention

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HONDA

Gasoline prices expected to rise in coming weeks

By Abigail L. Ho

MOTORISTS, PARTICULARLY THOSE DRIVING gasoline-fed vehicles, should brace themselves for another round of fuel price increases in the coming weeks.

Glenn Yu, president of Independent Philippine Petroleum Companies Association (Ippca), said that the organization's member-companies have been reviewing the movements of international oil prices.

He said that, despite the strengthening of the peso, which had helped arrest the local impact of escalating prices of fuel abroad, oil firms could still "not discount the possibility of further increases."

He related that, in January, the average price of gasoline was just around $61 a barrel. Four months later, Yu said, world gasoline prices hovered closer to the $91-a-barrel mark.

Yu said consumers should definitely "expect further adjustments because of the strained refinery situation in the United States."

"Any unexpected shutdown or unforeseen turnaround in the US would ... push prices of gasoline upwards," he noted, adding that the inventory of gasoline "are below the five-year average in the US."

There were now even concerns of a shortfall, he said, since the summer driving season in the US would already be starting next week.

According to data from the Department of Energy, the regional benchmark Dubai crude reached an average of $63.71 a barrel in the May 1-17 period, almost hitting the level of the high April average of $63.97 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products surged to an average of $88.16 a barrel in the first 17 days of the month, from only $83.64 a barrel in April.

MOPS-based diesel inched up to an average price of $82.84 a barrel as of May 17, from the April average of $82.11 a barrel.

Kids learn world of finance outside piggy banks

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

CORPORATE CITIZEN

THE FIRST FINANCIAL ADVICE CHILdren receive is to put their money in a piggy bank.

Unfortunately, many of these children grow up learning little else. Most perhaps would go on to open up a savings and checking account.

This is one reason why the Philippines has one of the lowest savings rates in Asia, and that an estimated P27 billion is locked up in coin banks, according to data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

But there is so much more that children can do with their money, which is why the Bank of the Philippine Islands has been going around high schools in Metro Manila to help make students financially literate.

A joint project with BPI Foundation, the BPI Jumpstart Savvy Savers Program consists of several school activities promoting responsible money management to students from grade four to fourth year high school.

BPI started in November last year with Holy Spirit in Novaliches. During the training session, students were taught to value long-term investments and concepts such as compounded interest rates and living within a budget.

Students are taught that saving means setting aside a portion of their money—and not just keeping what extra money is left because, chances are, the cash will be blown in a shopping spree.

They also learn the need to save to buy what they want with their own money and for emergencies. Saving up will also help them contribute to the family coffers.

BPI vice president Maricris San Diego says that, because the students learn as a group, they have more fun applying the lessons they learn.

Some of the tips include putting cash gifts they receive during special occasions, such as birthdays and Christmases, in a savings account and not just inside their wallets.

They are also encouraged to have a clear, time-specific goal to focus on while saving, so that they will be committed to achieve it.

And since students almost always save to have more shopping money, they are also given shopping tips during training sessions.

These include learning the art of comparison shopping, trying out generic brands or second-hand items, bringing *"baon"* to school and making their own gifts, instead of buying them.

And if they receive an allowance from their parents, they can choose to buy fewer items with it, and leave the rest in their savings account.

To earn more, they can consider having a part-time assignment or job, pursue a small business/project or sell clothes, toys or other items.

Helping BPI along in its efforts to instill financial discipline among children is the Department of Education for public schools, which issued a directive to include financial literacy in the curriculum starting this school year.

THE Bank of the Philippine Islands' Jumpstart Savvy Savers Program aims to get students to learn financial management as early as possible.

BSP has also recently signed a memorandum of agreement with the DepEd and Ateneo de Manila University—Economic Policy Reform and Advocacy—to help turn the country's students into wise savers.

BSP governor Amando Tetangco Jr. pointed out during the signing of the agreement that less than 5 percent of Filipino youth save regularly, a fact which "lends urgency to our program."

As such, money management lessons will now fall under the subjects on good manners and right conduct, home economics or social studies, as directed by DepEd. Financial literacy is mandated only for public schools, but private schools are also seeing the value of encouraging students to become financially literate and BPI has become a partner.

San Diego says that the money management program encourages the school to undertake a fund drive, because a certain percentage of money put in new BPI Jumpstart savings accounts are given back to the school.

DA embarks on 2nd phase of Mindanao development program

By Amy R. Remo

DAVAO CITY—THE DEPARTMENT OF Agriculture has started the second phase of the Mindanao Rural Development Program.

To cover 27 provinces and 225 municipalities in Mindanao, MRDP2 will run for five years at a total cost of $123.75 million.

"The second phase of MRDP would make income-generating activities and agricultural infrastructure available to more people," Agricultural Secretary Arthur C. Yap said here during the launch of the MRDP Adaptable Program Loan 2.

This program would be financed partly by the national and local governments while the World Bank would lend $84 million.

"Mindanao has great potential due to the abundance of its natural resources and skilled people and the MRDP2 would contribute to the region's sustainable and shared growth," said Carolina V. Figueroa-Geron, WB team leader for MRDP.

MRDP2's main components include investments for government reforms and program administration; rural infrastructure; community fund for agricultural development; and natural resource management.

Projects under the second phase would cover agriculture infrastructure, livelihood, environmental conservation and capacity building.

Completed projects under the first phase of MRDP include construction of 148 road projects measuring 700 km; 43 irrigation systems servicing 5,700 ha of farmlands; 28 units of potable water supply facilities; nine single lane bridges; 1,583 livelihood and small infrastructure projects which benefited about 40,000 households; and 1,416 barangay development plans.

"MRDP1 completed almost a billion worth of infrastructure projects and around P200 million worth of livelihood projects," said Roger C. Chio, MRDP director and Region XI executive director.

Noli Santos Foundation grants scholarships

THE EMMANUEL T. SANTOS FOUNDATION, also known as the Noli Santos Foundation granted P10,240,000 for scholarships of 400 valedictorians of public and private schools in all cities and municipalities of Metro Manila to enable the best and the brightest of Class 2007 to take up the English Proficiency Program of the International Academy of Management and Economics (IAME [eye-aim]) using the DynEd computer-aided learning of English.

In addition, 20 scholarships were granted to 20 valedictorians who opted to pursue at IAME the degree of Bachelor of Science of Business Administration major in either Entrepreneurship, Management, Marketing, Human Resource Development, Finance and Investment, and Public Sector Management.

IAME graduates of BSBA, MBA, and Ph.D. in Management are issued not only the diploma with CHED special order, but also international diploma with recognized equivalency by the prestigious and highly respected World Education Service (WES) of New York, USA which gives competitive advantage for landing supervisory and managerial jobs anywhere in the world. IAME has already produced several managers of multinational corporations in RP, Bangkok, Malaysia, Hongkong, US, Switzerland, Italy, Middle East, and Australia.

Lawyer-educator Emmanuel T. Santos, Ph.D., IAME chairman-CEO thanked the Rotary Club of Downtown Manila through its president lawyer Albert C. Santillan and Johnny B. Antillon, coordinator of the annual Honor the Valedictorians Program for the opportunity of meeting the 400 high school valedictoriams and their parents. No other college or university here and abroad has ever granted such massive scholarships for English Proficiency Program as what IAME has done, thus establishing a "first" in world record in the field of educational philantrophy.

Foreign and local students are now enrolling in the BSBA, MBA, EMBA major in Management and Corporate Governance for corporate chairman, president, CEO's. COO's. board directors, and corporate secretaries, and Ph.D. in Management and Political Economy at the International Academy of Management and Economics located at Ayala Avenue Extension (turn Left, off) Noli Santos International Tower, 1061 Metropolitan Avenue corner Chino Roces Avenue, Makati City. Its contact numbers are: 896-23-55/58; fax: 896-23-51; e-mail: chairman@iame.edu.ph; website: iame.edu.ph.

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METROBANK BAGS 4TH TRUSTED BRAND AWARD

Metropolitan Bank & Trust Company (Metrobank), the country's largest bank in assets, was recently conferred the 2007 Reader's Digest Trusted Brand Gold award. This is the fourth consecutive year that Metrobank received the citation under the Bank category. Metrobank executive vice president Fabian S. Dee (third from left) accepted the award during the ceremonies held at the Peninsula Manila Hotel in Makati City. He said this merit equates to the consumers' perception that the Metrobank franchise remains top of mind among respondents and the preferred brand by Filipino banking consumers. With Dee are (from left) Reader's Digest Philippines advertising director Lilet Camara-Yan, Reader's Digest regional advertising director Simon Cholmeley, and Metrobank vice president Ronald C. Rosales.

CMC DEPARTMENT OF PEDIATRICS HOLDS 12TH SCIENTIFIC SYMPOSIUM

Capitol Medical Center Department of Pediatrics will be holding its 12th Scientific Symposium in celebration of CMC's 37th Anniversary, entitled 'Nutrigenomics and Nutraceuticals ...The New Paradigm in Clinical Nutrition' on June 21, at CMC V 12th Floor Auditorium from 7 a.m. to 4 p.m. This will focus on the effect of food supplements and personalized diets, on the immune system, allergy, certain infections, metabolic diseases, and behavioral problems. For particulars please contact 0917-8921591 or 372-3825 local 1747.

LCCM'S KENYAN STUDENTS IN MEDICAL MISSION

Three years since they first set foot at La Consolacion College Manila, Kenyan nursing students Linda Dzuya and Harriet Muchera are now actively participating in the school's various medical missions. In the recent Medical and Dental Mission of the Mo. Rita Barcelo Pastoral Foundation Center (MRBPFC) at Brgy. West Poblacion in Pantabangan, Nueva, Ecija, both Linda and Harriet got themselves busy assisting the four doctors in taking the blood pressure of the patients and in dispensing medicines. The medical and dental mission was sponsored by LCCM High School Alumnae Batch 1993.

Hot 'Tricks' for the cool dude

KATRINA HALILI AND IWA Moto, sizzled and set the house on fire at the recent Tricks Clayboys Mansion Party at C3 Events Place in Greenhills. The two young sexy stars raised the temperatures of male partyphiles in this gig that served as the culminating event of the Tricks Clayboys Club.

Aside from Katrina and Iwa, six nubile Claymates, mingled with the crowd in the tradition of the Playboy bunnies. As a surprise, they later strutted onstage at the Tricks Claymate Auction. The highest bidders got to spend the night with their chosen Claymate. But the piece de resistance for the night – the ultimate surprise was that Katrina and Iwa themselves were up for bids.

At the Tricks Claymate Auction, winning bidders also got Tricks goodies, like gift certificates, a Clayboy shirt and a designer watch or perfume. Unadulterated fun was had by all as the Tricks Styling Clay was introduced that night.

In the search for Clayboys, Claymates, – six bodacious babes roamed the metro's hottest nightspots. They went on the prowl for Clayboys who embody the Tricks brand's aspirations for the modern man: sexy, stylish, brash and confident. The Clayboys Mansion Party solidified the position of Tricks Styling Clay clear as the 'next generation styling tool for the cool dude.

The Tricks Styling Clay has a strong, remoldable hold with a mild, masculine scent. Unlike other hairstyling products, it lets you re-invent and re-design your hair to create different styles throughout the day without adding water or applying more goo. Tricks comes in a 50-gram bolt-and-screw hexagonal silver jar and is available in matte finish or natural shine. Tricks is the premium hairstyling brand of all-Filipino company Splash Corp. It is the latest addition to its line of innovative products to answer every need of young stylish males.

Brace yourself for bigger, hotter gigs from Tricks!

Portage Birth to Six Training

CIVILIAN INTERNATIONAL WILL conduct a Conference on the "Portage Birth to Six" in cooperation with the Cooperative Education Service Agency (Cesa 5), Wisconsin, USA. Portage trainers: Julia Herwig, and Michelle Davies, will train trainers of the Department of Education, Department Social Welfare and Development, Department of Health and various health professionals. The New Portage Guide takes the best of our original materials, the Portage Guide to Early Education, and incorporates current early childhood research and best practices. These materials present a functional assessment process that is strength based. They provide suggested routine based activities and intervention strategies and support staff in thinking reflectively about their work. During this two-day workshop, the Portage Project staff will provide an overview of the New Portage Guide and present a framework for utilizing these materials in early intervention programs. Participants will have the opportunity to practice using the materials and to discuss strategies to use the materials to support "Early Intervention Program for Filipino Children with Developmental Disabilities" in the Philippines. The trainers will also discuss their experiences in applying relationship based, strength based, ecological, and family centered approaches utilizing the "Even Start" program and their work with other Portage programs. Participants will have the opportunity to practice using the materials and to discuss strategies to use the materials to support "Early Intervention Program for Filipino Children with Developmental Disabilities" in the Philippines. The trainers will also discuss their experiences in applying relationship based, strength based, ecological, and family centered approaches utilizing the "Even Start" program and their work with other Portage programs in the US, Europe, Asia and other countries. Conference is schedule on May 24 to 25, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Club Filipino, Greenhills, San Juan. For more information contact Civilian secretariat at FDM Medical Center, tel. no. 416-6142 or via e-mail: civitanphils@kskyinet.net.

IBP OFFICERS MEET VP NOLI DE CASTRO

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines (IBP) Oriental Mindoro officers, led by chapter president Emmanuel S. Buenaventura (third from left), litigation partner of Quisumbing Torres and former provincial board member, recently made a courtesy call and took their oath of office before Vice President Noli de Castro at the Office of the Vice President in Pasay City. The other IBP Oriental Mindoro officers present are (from left) director Virgilio C. Leynes of Leynes Sarmiento & Associates; secretary Charlotte F. Aguba, a corporate and commercial associate of Quisumbing Torres; vice president Florante S. Legaspi of Legaspi Law Office; director Thaddeus E. Venturanza, SEC Commissioner and former vice governor, and director Pancho Garong of the Department of Finance. During their meeting, lawyer Buenaventura and the IBP officers informed the Vice President, who also hails from Oriental Mindoro, about their programs and projects, including the proposed Justice and IBP Halls in Calapan City.

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Transportation and Communications
CIVIL AERONAUTICS BOARD

IN RE : PETITION FOR ISSUANCE OF CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY (CPCN) TO OPERATE DOMESTIC NON-SCHEDULED AIR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES (AIR TAXI SERVICES)
CAB Case No. EP-29359-LED0407/005

BEELINE HELICOPTERS, INC.
Petitioner.
x- x

NOTICE OF HEARING

Pursuant to the provisions of R.A. 776, as amended, notice is hereby given that **BEELINE HELICOPTERS, INC.** has filed with the Civil Aeronautics Board a petition for issuance of Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) to operate non-scheduled domestic air transportation services (Air Taxi Services). The initial hearing of the above entitled case will be held on **29 May 2007 at 2:00 P.M.** in the CAB Conference Room of the Civil Aeronautics Board, Old MIA Road, Pasay City, before the undersigned Hearing Officer, at which hearing the petitioner shall present evidence

Under Section 16 of R.A. 776, the applicant is hereby required to have this Notice of Hearing published at least once a week for three (3) consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation and have copies hereof and the application be sent to all Philippine carriers, either by personal service or by registered mail with return card at least five (5) days before the scheduled hearing.

Parties opposed to the granting of the petition must file their written opposition on or before the date of the hearing, furnishing a copy of the same to the petitioner, and appear at the hearing with such evidence as may be proper under the premises. Failure on the part of any interested party to file its opposition on time and appear at the hearing shall be construed as a waiver of its right to be heard and the Civil Aeronautics Board shall proceed to hear and decide this petition on its merit.

Let a copy of this Notice be posted at the CAB Bulletin Board beginning today.

02 May 2007
Pasay City, Philippines

(Sgd.) MA. ELBEN SL. MORO
Hearing Officer

Copy furnished:

ATTY. DOMINGO G. FORONDA
Counsel for Petitioner
5th Floor, BMG Centre, Paseo de Magallanes, Makati City

ATTY. ROBERTO C.O. LIM
PAL Legal Department
Philippine Airlines, Inc.
9/F, PAL Center, Legaspi St., Legaspi Village, Makati City

ATTY. RAYMUND JAY S. GOMEZ
Counsel for Cebu Pacific
Cebu Air, Inc.
Airline Operations Center APC
Domestic Airport, Pasay

ATTY. JONATHAN ANDREW D. LIM
Legal Department
Air Philippines Corporation
Gate I, Andrews Avenue, Pasay City

MR. REYNALDO L. RODRIGUEZ
Vice President, Commercial Group
Asian Spirit, Inc.
Domestic Airport Road, Pasay City

ATTY. GEORGE ANDY B. PANTANOSAS
Counsel for PEAC
Pacific East Asia Cargo Airlines, Inc.
12th Floor, Allied Bank Center
6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City

ATTY. ISAGANI LALUNA
Interisland Resorts & Services, Inc.
Domestic Road, Pasay City

ATTY. ELVIRO PEREZ III
Counsel for SEAIR, Inc
South East Asian Airline, Inc.
Domestic Road, Pasay City

(PDI – May 10 & 17 & 24, 2007)

INVITATION TO BID

SOYA PROTEIN CONCENTRATE
208 Bags (each x 20 kgs.)
May 29, 2007
2:00 p.m. @ MASCO Office
For particulars, pls. contact:
Ding Placido &/or Tina Banal @
MASCO 840-3669 / 813-0719

(PDI – May 24, 2007)

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PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5282

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Bid Tender 1:

	APPROVED BUDGET
51,360 feet of 9-5/8" Seamless Casings	
FGK 70519	*PHP 35,450,000.00*
FGK 70520	*PHP 63,600,000.00*
LOT OR COMPLETE	*PHP 99,050,000.00*

Bid Tender 2:

	APPROVED BUDGET
Various Sizes of Retaining and Seal Rings under FGT 72245/46/47/48/50	
Schedule 1	*PHP 1,644,960.00*
Schedule 2	*PHP 3,699,700.00*
LOT OR COMPLETE	*PHP 5,344,660.00*

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maria Cristina Lynn M. Mercado** starting **May 24, 2007** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P3,000.00 for bid tender 1 and P2,000.00 for bid tender 2.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **June 1, 2007, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management Department Wall Clock time)** on **June 14, 2007**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - May 24, 2007)

Republic of the Philippines
Department of Health
DR. JOSE FABELLA MEMORIAL HOSPITAL
Manila

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Dr. Jose Fabella Memorial Hospital invites interested bidders/suppliers to bid for:

Name of Project : Supply and Delivery of FOODSTUFF
Approved Budget : P 3,543,900.00

Bid documents may be secured at the BAC Secretariat, Administrative Office. For details, please contact telephone no. 735-7144.

Schedule of Activities:

	Date/Time	Venue
Pre-bid Conference	May 31, 2007 2:00 p.m.	Reception Room
Bid Opening	June 12, 2007 2:00 p.m.	Reception Room

All particulars relative to eligibility, bid security, performance, pre-bid, opening of bids, evaluation, post-qualification and award shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of RA 9184 and its implementing rules and regulations.

The DJFMH reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any formality found therein and to accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

The DJFMH-BAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or losses that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) ELISEA S. MARQUEZ, M.D., D.P.B.A.
Chairperson, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI – May 24, 2007)

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

NOTICE OF LOSS

The National Housing Authority (NHA) informs the general public, the loss of its Official Receipts with the following serial numbers:

No. of Pcs.	Serial Numbers From	Serial Numbers To
Two (2)	2699349	2699350
Fifty (50)	2789751	2789800

The abovementioned NHA Official Receipts are deemed cancelled and any payment acknowledged under these Official Receipts shall not be honored by NHA.

NATIONAL HOUSING AUTHORITY

(PDI – May 24, 2007)

Accion Contra el Hambre
Philippine Mission
12 Zipper Street, San Lorenzo Village
Makati City
Tel No (+632) 8401808

INVITATION TO BID

ACCION CONTRA EL HAMBRE (ACF-E) is a Spanish humanitarian, voluntary, non-governmental (N.G.O.), non-religious, non-political and non-profit making organization. ACF-E is providing assistance to farmers affected by Typhoons in the province of Sorsogon. In line with this, ACF-E intends to award supply contracts for:

CONTRACT 1 : INBRED RICE CERTIFIED SEEDS

Quantity*	Unit	Variety and other specifications
1530	Bags(40Kgs)	PSB Rc 18, 123 days to maturity
1000	Bags(40Kgs)	PSB Rc 10, 106 days to maturity
140	Bags(40Kgs)	NSIC 112, 111 days to maturity
130	Bags(40Kgs)	PSB Rc 82, 110 days to maturity

Note that a germination rate of at least 85 %, a purity of at least 98 % and a moisture content of maximum 14 % is required.

CONTRACT 2 : INORGANIC FERTILIZER

Quantity*	Unit	Type and other specifications
1130	Bags(50Kgs)	Complete 14 - 14 - 14
525	Bags(50Kgs)	Ammophos 16 – 20 - 0
1145	Bags(50Kgs)	Urea 46 – 0 - 0

* The quantities specified are just indicative and might change after field validation.

This will be delivered to different municipalities of Sorsogon Province. Cost of Delivery must be included in the Bid Amount.
Bidders for both rice seeds and Fertilizers are required to submit 2 separate bids (contract 1 and contract 2).

The tender dossier is available from Accion Contra el Hambre office. It can be requested at this email address: **logcoordo_achfilipinas@yahoo.com** or by phone: **(02) 8401808.**
Deadline for submission is June 1, 2007 at 5o'clock in the afternoon. The opening of the bids will take place in Accion Contra el Hambre Makati office on June 4, 2007 at 10.00 am.

(PDI - May 24 & 27, 2007)

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PNOC-ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
Energy Complex, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City
Tel. No. 893-1320, Local 5288

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation is inviting all interested suppliers to apply and submit sealed bids for the supply and delivery of the following:

Atomic Absorption Spectrophotometer
Under FGM 70302
Approved Budget: PHP 1,776,000.00

Eligibility forms and bidding documents shall be available for issuance at the above address c/o **Ms. Maricar A. Garduce** starting **May 24, 2007** and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P1,000.00 per document.

For purposes of clarifying certain matters, a pre-bidding conference shall be held on **June 1, 2007, 2:00 p.m.** at the above address.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be submitted to, and registered with the PNOC-EDC Supply Management Department at the above address, and thereafter dropped in the padlocked bid box thereat not later than **2:00 p.m. (Supply Management's Department Wall Clock Time)** of **June 15, 2007**. Public opening of bids shall follow immediately thereafter. **Late bids shall not be accepted.**

Prospective bidders shall signify conformance to the bidding terms and conditions, as required, and shall ensure the same through proper submission/execution. Source of funding is from Internal Cash Generation of PNOC-EDC. All bids should be within the Approved Budget for the Contract in order to qualify.

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation reserves the right to annul the bidding process, to reject any or all bids, to waive any informality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to PNOC-EDC without thereby incurring liability to the affected bidder or bidders or any obligation to inform the affected bidder or bidders of the ground(s) for PNOC-EDC's action.

Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee II

(PDI – May 24, 2007)

OBITUARIES

DEATH NOTICE

JOSEFA "Jo" S. EDRALIN
Formerly with the United Nation Centre for Development (UNCRD)

died on May 22, 2007 at the age of 68.

She is survived by her sisters **Annie E. Sison**, **Dr. Marie E. Aganon** and brother **Ramon**.

Her body lies in state at the Our Lady of Consolacion Church, Mira Nila Homes, Barangay Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, Quezon City.

Cremation will be on May 26, 2007 at 9 a.m. at the Eternal Garden Crematorium Novaliches, Quezon City after the 6:30 a.m. Mass at the Our Lady of Consolacion Church.

Lovingly Remembered
on his 2nd Death Anniversary

ROMULO Y. ABAYA

May 24, 2007

MASSES:

1. Santuario del Sto. Cristo .... 6:00 P.M.
   F. Blumentritt, San Juan, M.M.
2. Saint John Bosco Parish .... 6:00 P.M.
   Laguna Techno Park, Laguna
3. Saint Dominic Savio Parish .... 6:30 A.M.
   Pag-Asa, Mandaluyong City
4. Our Lady of Fatima Parish .... 6:00 A.M.
   Mandaluyong City 7:00 A.M.
   6:00 P.M.
5. Parish of San Felipe Neri .... 6:00 A.M.
   Aglipay St., Mandaluyong City 7:00 A.M.
   6:00 P.M.
   7:00 P.M.
6. Sto. Niño Parish .... 6:30 P.M.
   Jesus St., Pandacan, Manila

Our Dearly Beloved

MYRA ESPINO AQUINO

(April 4, 1938 - May 16, 2007)

peacefully joined our Lord on May 16, 2007 at the age of 69.

Her children and in-laws **Phil**, **Lady Joy** & **Verwyn**, **Kathleen Mae** & **William**, **Fausto Fame, Jr.**, **Fausto Myfame** & **Rosana**, **Myra Fame** & **Dennis**, **Ma. Buena Grace**; grandchildren **Lovely Grace**, **JR**, **JC**, **Ian**, **Katrina**, **Kenneth**, **Princess**, **Jof** & **Mattheus**.

Her body lies in state at Buena Vista Ecumenical Chapel at her residence in #54 Osmeña St., Life Homes Subdivision, Pasig City.

Interment will be on May 27, 2007 (Sunday) at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City, 2:00 p.m. Mass will be held at 12:00 noon at the residence.

We will always remember
Our Dearly Beloved
Mommy, Lola, Professor and Friend

FELICIDAD V. PINEDA

who peacefully joined our Creator
on May 21, 2007 at the age of 92.

Her brother **Prospero** & wife **Maruja**; children **Levy** (†) & **Maelou**, **Pete** & **Nerissa**, **Rose** & **Roble**, **Inday** & **Rene**; grandchildren, relatives and friends request your prayers.

Her body lies in state at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish (CLARET), U.P. Village, Diliman, Quezon City.

Interment will be on May 26, 2007 at the South Cemetery after the 8:00 a.m. Mass.

"My soul finds rest in God alone; my salvation comes from Him."
Psalm 62:1

CONSUELO MACATAÑGAY vda. de TORRALBA

"Mama Conching"

passed away in the Grace of the Lord
on May 22, 2007 at the age of 95.

Her children **Erlinda** & **Rafael Bersalona** (†), **Ben** & **Baby Rubio**, **Danny** & **Glo Piñon**, **Lala** & **Tom Del Castillo**, **Ofelia** & **Ric Palabrica**, **Teresita** & **Sonny Mascareñas**; grandchildren, great-grandchildren; relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at **Funeraria Paz**, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City, **Superior Chapel**, Annex Bldg.

Interment will be on Saturday, May 26, 2007 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after the 1:30 p.m. Mass.

Notify family and friends of a loved one who had just passed away.

We accept death notices, announcing details of the person's wake and interment. For a very affordable fee you can reach out to everyone who have been a part of the life of your dearly departed. For more information, you may contact Inquirer Classifieds at (02)897 8425.

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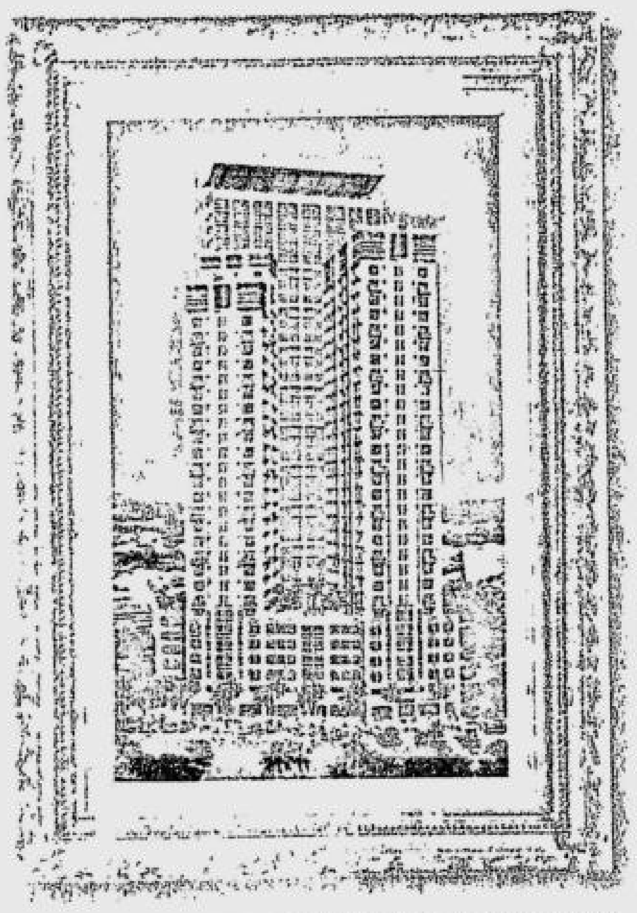

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LIFESTYLE

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The Philippine team received the gold medal in the recent Hong Kong International Culinary Classic 2007

GOOD as gold: The winning team of Filipino chefs

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

Good news about food and then some

WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

Well, that is what today's column is all about. Bits and pieces of my favorite things, my favorite people, things I look forward to and all the joy of sharing the good news with you...

Hail to the Philippine Team!

For the first time in history, our national culinary team brought home the gold! J said never was there a bigger Philippine contingent wearing medals up on stage... But I leave this story for him to tell next week in Kitchen Rescue.

The women of FHM

Three of the most respected people in the field of food, chefs Myrna Segismundo and Jill Sandique and INQUIRER columnist and food writer Micky Fenix star on FHM TV! *Ay, este*... "Chef TV" *pala* starting end of May on the Lifestyle Channel!

"Chef TV" tackles not just food but all the other aspects of the industry. The segments are as diverse as cuisine in a historical and cultural context. The show tells the audience where to buy ingredients and discusses even table etiquette and food science.

To dearest Myrna, Jill and Micky, see, we need not take it off to be on TV! Hahaha! Happy cooking and the best of luck, from your show's No. 1 fan!

Wellness gurus

Sostanza Healthline, the brainchild of chef Margarita Fores and Alvin Lim, has been providing us the luxury and convenience of having specialized diets delivered to our doorstep.

Good news is the wellness gurus have new diets other than South Beach and the Filipino Version of it. They now have Zone (less low-carb diet, allows fruit and complex carbohydrates all throughout the diet period); 3-Day Diet, endorsed by the American Heart Association, a set combination of proteins, vegetables, and carbs that allows a cup of vanilla ice cream for dessert every night; Low-Iodine Diet for Thyroid Cancer Therapy; and Margarita's Home Diet, lean versions of dishes cooked mostly with broths and nonfat oil sprays.

Say goodbye to caterpillar curves and hel-

GOOD/ C3

TV TRIO: Micky Fenix, Myrna Segismundo and Jill Sandique

WELLNESS gurus Alvin Lim and chef Margarita Fores

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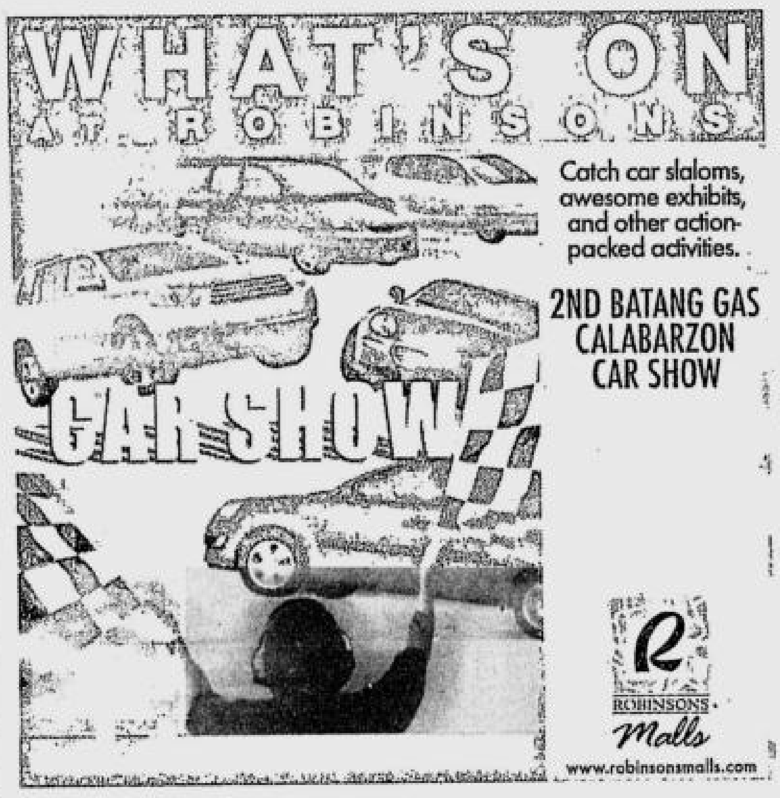

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COUNTRY COOKING
Micky Fenix

Filipino ingenuity

EVER HEARD OF A SOFTdrink can that was converted into a cooking stove?

I could hardly believe my eyes when I was shown one by our host, Sonie Altavas, in Roxas City.

She was passing through the wet market when she saw vendors cooking their food by the roadside. It looked, she said, like a small gas stove with blue flames emanating from holes punched on the side.

The fuel? Denatured alcohol like what is used to warm up chaffing dishes on buffet tables.

The roadside cooks told Sonie that they used the converted stove to cook their meals. A bigger version for bigger pots that need more heat uses three softdrink cans.

In her kitchen, Sonie uses the innovative stove to boil water. That's how long a full load of denatured alcohol lasts.

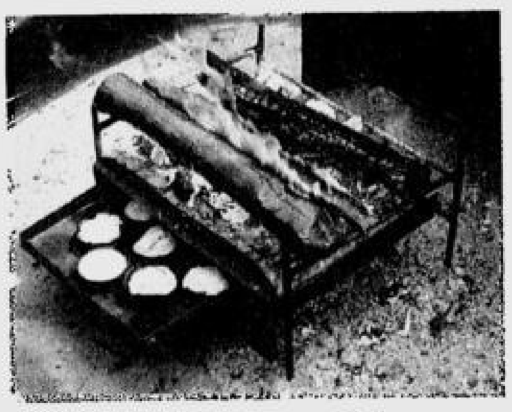
Milk-can stove

At the Dumaguete Buglasan festival, a food vendor in the exhibit area cooked on a big baby milk can that served as a stove. Its top was cut to fit a small milk can. The smaller can had a batter mix that in a few minutes became cassava *bibingka*.

The principle is the same as with cooking *puto bumbong*. There is the usual improvised tin stove and on top the small bamboo tubes where the purple *puto* batter will steam.

At the *duman* festival in Sta. Rita, Pampanga, I found out the big milk can also be used to cook *puto bumbong*. So from north to south, people apparently have the same idea.

My Dumaguete hosts also told me that the vendors selected a certain brand of small milk can because it didn't rust. I suppose it has something to do with the coating in some of them.


PORTABLE ***bibingka*** **cooker of Iloilo**

Butter can for 'puto'

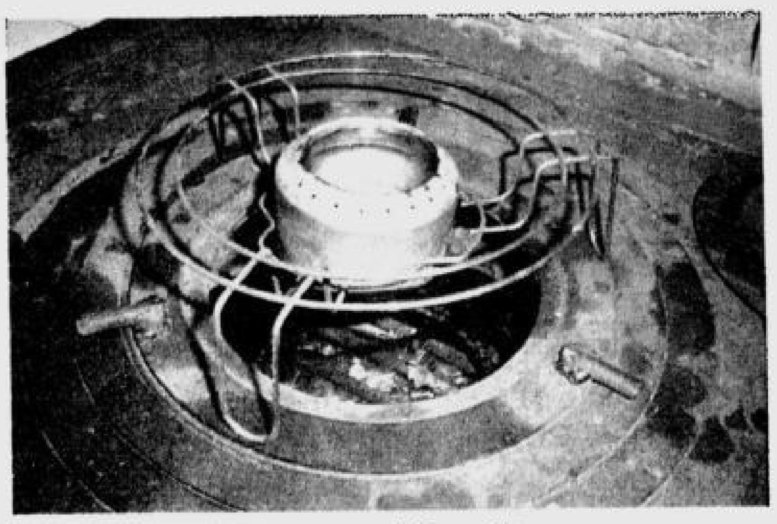
In Iloilo, Edilberto Acla showed me an empty plastic can of butter that had been recycled as his cooking container for *puto lanson*, the Ilonggo version of the cassava cake. Behind him was a halved water drum where some pieces of peeled cassava were soaking for next day's batch.

The halved water drum is a bigger version of the kerosene can used as a stove in Talisay, Cebu. We found the contraption after following someone's directions to where the wonderful cassava cake she was holding was being done.

Round the corner, an old woman was cooking those cakes in round tin containers on top of the converted kerosene can.

In Guimaras, the cooking stove for making the *tultul*, the block salt, is made up of two hardened rows of sand. But the cooking vessel is a tin sheet from a cooking-oil tin can.

Tultul-maker Serafin Ganila said the oil cans had their four sides cut and were then sold. He buys those, an added cost that keeps going up. He raises the corners so that the filtered salt water can be held while cooking.


SOFTDRINK can becomes a stove in Roxas City.

ABOVE: improvised stove and container from two kinds of milk cans in Dumaguete. Right: kerosene can stove for Mactan-style cassava cake

Most famous

Perhaps the most famous cooking vessel is the *llanera*, also known as the *flanera* because it is where *leche flan* is cooked. The oval tin container is also used when Lukban, Quezon folks do their *jardinera*, their meat loaf dish.

I was told that the oval can of sardines must have been its predecessor because there were *puto* shaped like that in some provinces.

But during Christmas, I always wait for the *llanera* that holds the *ube halaya* of *Mang* Gusting, my grandmother's driver who had retired. I'm sure the *llanera* wasn't where the *ube* was cooked because I always helped *lola* do it, stirring the thickening *halaya* in a big *kawali*.

On market days and during the fiestas of Iloilo towns, there are stalls that make *bibingka*. These are cooked in what look like a tin cabinet with drawers where the *bibingka* is placed.

It is a simple, serviceable contraption that is portable. As in all *bibingka* cookers, there is fire above and below.

We bought those *bibingka* as soon as they were cooked because the pieces are never as good when allowed to cool.

In Mohon, whose *bibingka* is known throughout Iloilo City, the business is good that's why the oven is bigger thus not portable. But it is the *bibingka* to have because of the amount of *buko* strips each piece contains.

All those ingenious contraptions were made out of necessity. There's no extra money to buy equipment so you look around and just use what is available around you, tweak it a bit and you have what you need—a stove, a cooking vessel.

Sometimes, you can spare some money and buy what somebody else built, nothing fancy but again, serviceable and portable.

Whenever I see those made-up, improvised equipment, it reinforces my faith in Filipino creativity.

No need for recycling programs in this country. We've been doing that for ages.

E-mail the author at pinoyfood04@yahoo.com

Making summer hotter —without adverse side effects

By Shirley Oh
Contributor

THE HEAT HAS BEEN A REAL KILLER THIS summer.

Even on the pristine white shores of Boracay, the usual summer to-dos—morning suntanning sessions, leisurely midday strolls—had to be kept to a minimum in order to prevent sun damage or heat stroke. The heat can also cause one to be more sluggish than regular during the day, making holing up in a hotel room and tuning in to cable TV a more inviting prospect. That was why come evening, it was a relief to come out and make the most of the island's night life.

Ginebra San Miguel Inc.'s (GSMI) biggest black-light party in Boracay at Pier One was the event to go that hot Friday night, part of GSMI's Infinit' Summer Cool Party Series as it introduced the country's first and only ready-to-drink cocktail mix to the public.

It's as if the vibrant colors of summer have been preserved in a bottle: The six variants of the RTD cocktail mix Infinit' all perfectly cater to the hip, young crowd that loves to have fun without going overboard. Indeed, "Infinit offers the value of cocktails without the hassle of mixing," says GSMI vice president for marketing Melson S. Elises.

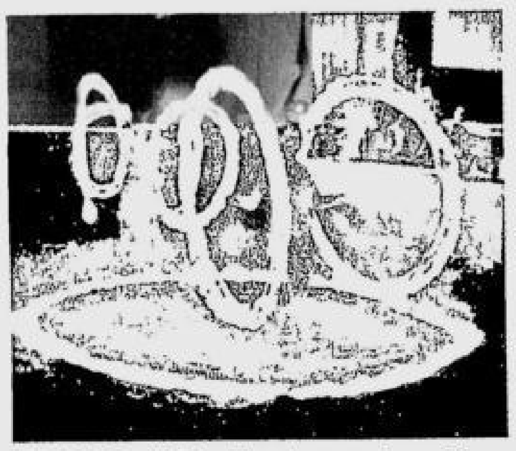
In continuation of the Infinit' Summer Cool Party Series, which has already invaded Cebu and Puerto Galera, Boracay's biggest black-light party started with a series of performances that got the crowd excited and on their feet, drawing in even more party-goers way into the wee hours of the morning. From a percussion group to DJs spinning mixes on the turntable, fire dancers and go-go girls each representing an Infinit' flavor, entertainment and good times were overflowing just like the bottles and bottles of Infinit' available for everyone to taste and pick a favorite from.

For the Strawberry Margarita, the base alcohol of choice is the Don Enrique Mixkila; for the Grape Sling Royale, it's the combination of Gran Matador Solera Brandy and GSM Blue; for Tropical Pineapple Sling, it's the Tondeña Rum 8 Years; for the Citrus Chill, it's Antonov Vodka; for Green Tea Frost, it's GSM Premium Gin; and for the Blue Cola Freezer, it's the St. George Premium Whiskey.

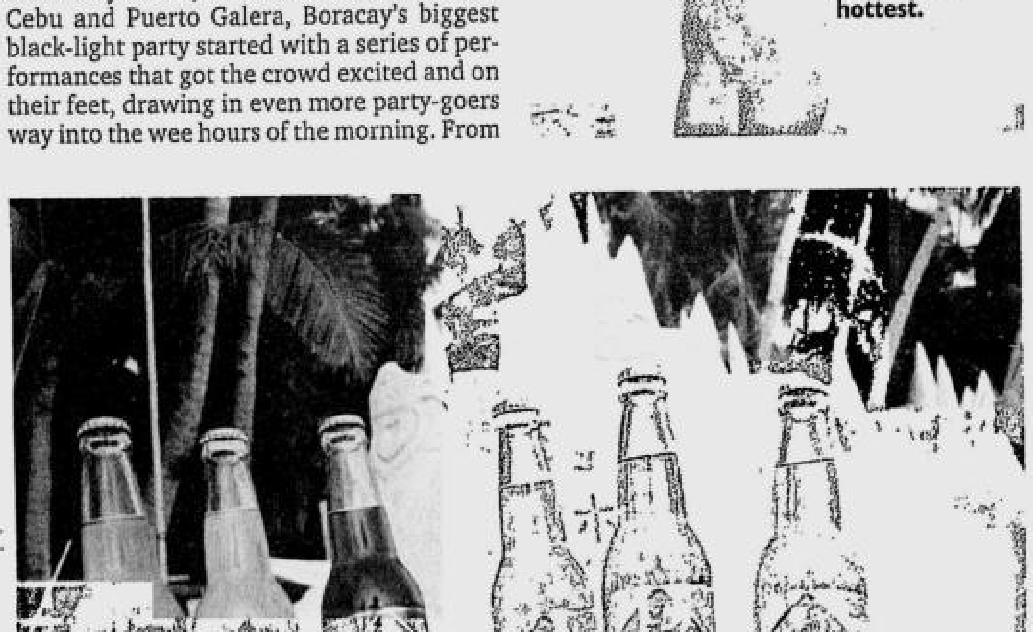
Even for the usually alcohol-adverse, the smooth and refreshing taste of Infinit' makes drinking a fun, light experience. It can even give them the chance to brag of having downed some of the most popular and premium alcoholic heavyweights out there, minus the usual hangover and uncontrollable inebriation, as the fruit-based non-carbonated Infinit' has only five-percent alcohol content.

Despite the intense summer heat putting a damper on everyone's daytime plans, there is always GSMI Infinit' to rely on to bring a good dose of fun to summer gimmick nights.

INFINIT' can cool you down even when the day is at its hottest.


PLAYING with fire. Fire dancers show off their tricks.

BOTTOMS UP. A black-light party-goer chugs down a bottle of Infinit'.


INFINIT' on the beach. The Infinit' ready-to-drink cocktail mixes come in six variants and colors that reflect the spirit of summer.

NOT-SO-LITTLE drummer boys provide beats to the black-light party all night long.

Spicing up the Boracay experience

CAFÉ MED NOW OFFERS THE distinct taste of the sunny Mediterranean in Boracay, the country's most popular destination island with the opening of its eighth restaurant.

The essence of the cuisine, according to co-owner and resident chef, Dixie Mabanta, is not only in the sauces, but in the passionate enjoyment of life.

Considered by its loyal patrons as the home of kebabs, gyros and falafels, Café Med adheres to strict standards. Coowner Marla Tañada promises the same excellent service for which they are renowned, as well as a casual yet refined dining experience.

As in its other branches, earthy Moroccan elements may be found in the restaurant's air-conditioned interiors. A cozy and intimate combination of beach casualness and wood has resulted in a beach version of shabby chic.

Functioning also as the food and beverage arm of the 28-room boutique hotel The Boracay Beach Club, Café Med Boracay will also be serving comfort dishes and full breakfasts.

Ask for their mixed grill fresh seafood platter. It serves four people, with couscous, Moroccan vegetable stew and harissa on the side.

Café Mediterranean is located in Station 1, streetside in Boracay. Call 63-362886770. It has six branches in Manila—Greenbelt 1, Rockwell, Alabang, The Podium, Robinson's Galleria, SM Mall of Asia—and will soon open a branch in Davao.

Coffee and tea bar opens new outlet in mall

TEA AND COFFEE LOVERS CAN look forward to a fresh experience with the launch of Chaikofi Xpresso's third branch at the west wing of the second level of Robinson's Galleria in Quezon City.

Cleverly coined from *chai*, the Russian term for tea and *kofi*, the Dutch term for coffee, Chaikofi is the brainchild of Arie Willard, a Dutch industrial engineer who has been in the country for about 35 years.

More than just another coffee shop, Chaikofi offers a new twist to the coffee-or-tea experience, offering creative concoctions with catchy names like zonteas, which literally mean "sun teas," *zon* having been derived from the Dutch word for sun.

The fruit-flavored iced teas are made with freshly brewed green or black tea combined with exotic spices and exciting fruit flavors—an experience that serious tea lovers will find quite refreshing and novel.

With Chaikofi, the days of watered-down coffee, insipid teas and boring food are over, Willard promises. And with good reason, too, since Chaikofi offers a vast array of beverages and delicious food—from soups and appetizers down to salads, pastas, sandwiches and desserts—all served in eye-catching cups and pots that reflect Willard's creative and playful nature.

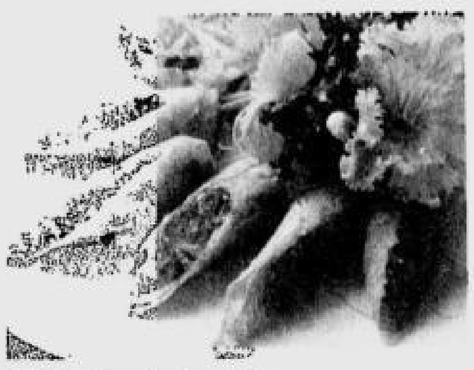
Supreme blends of Arabica coffee beans are brewed with the siphon method that gives it that full-bodied taste that coffeeholics will surely love.

According to Willard, what makes Chaikofi's concoctions even better is the use of stevia—a nontoxic, noncaloric herb grown in Paraguay—as a sweetener. It's a guilt-free way to drink, and even diabetics can have as many as they want, the affable Dutch assures. The dishes, on the other hand, are prepared using substances with antioxidant properties that are believed to help reduce the risk of cancer and cardiovascular diseases.

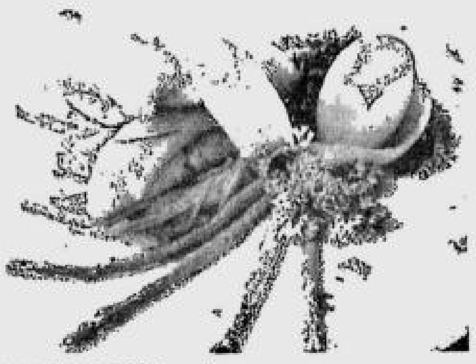
So the next time you find yourself in need of good conversation, spice it up with a delightful cup of tea or coffee and more at Chaikofi's cozy new branch at the Robinson's Galleria mall. You'd be deliciously surprised.

CHAIKOFI offers creative tea and coffee concoctions with catchy names.

A culinary dream team



CHAP Chae Spring Rolls



LAPU-LAPU Caprice

ONE IS ALREADY A WELL-RESPECTED NAME in Manila's gastronomic circles, a bon vivant with old-world flair and gentlemanly ways. The other is a fast-rising star with a growing collection of international culinary awards tucked under his belt, a multi-tasking Gen-Xer, just as comfortable pumping iron at the gym as he is wielding an iron skillet in the kitchen.

Chefs Ed Quimson and Tristan Bayani compose the new culinary dream team of Splendido Taal Golf Club along the Tagaytay Ridge.

Quimson is known for his innovative take on food. His travels and work experiences in the United States and in various European countries influenced his cooking style and finely tuned his sense of taste.

Quimson said that from different countries, different cultures, different types of food, he got to know what kind of spices should be used for what food.

When he cooked, Quimson said, he had the memory of how food should taste so that the actual flavor of the dish and the taste in his mind should match. Lessons like these things could not be learned in school or a cookbook, he said.

Quimson said his cooking styles were unorthodox so he set no boundaries or borders.

Bayani took a circuitous road to culinary arts. He initially studied Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Santo Tomas. Later, he earned a business degree from AMA Computer College.

But one day, when his sister who wanted to study cooking in Heny Sison's school could not make it, she sent him instead. His interest piqued, Bayani finished the Essential Cooking and Baking course under chef Jill Sandique.

He became a sous-chef at Filos on the recommendation of Heny Sison. Impressed by Bayani's work, Quimson became his mentor.

The two chefs were soon bringing their cooking expertise in many collaborative projects.

At the age of 30, Bayani has already earned several international culinary awards including first prize in the Michigan Food Competition in 2004, and second prize in the Key West Florida Hotel & Restaurant Foodfest (two-appetizer division) in 2004.

Last year, while completing a six-month culinary scholarship, Bayani participated in the 2006 Seoul International Culinary Competition. He received the silver medal in the appetizer segment.

Asked about his favorite cuisine, Bayani said Asian cooking because of its wide range of taste and flavors.

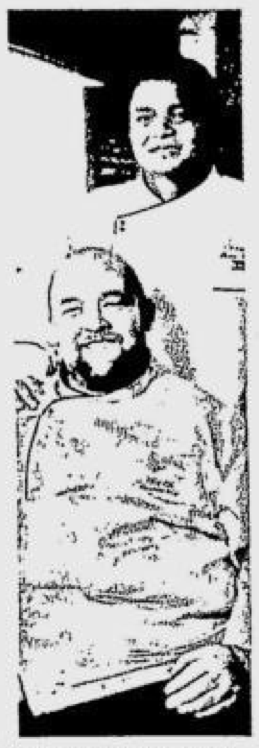
But he said he preferred Filipino home-cooked meals and regional specialties.

Bayani said taste was the primary determinant of good food. He pointed out that people did not choose a restaurant because the presentation was good but because food was great.

He said Quimson and he had similar tastes and the same way of cooking. Describing themselves as food scientists, he said they loved to experiment.

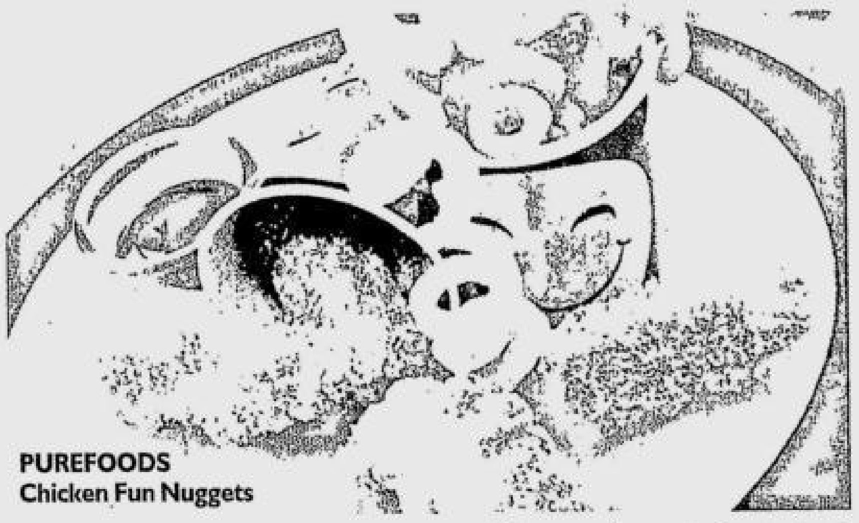
The culinary dream team's creations are available at Splendido Taal Golf Club's Ladera Golfers' Lounge and La Esquina Spanish Restaurant.

Splendido Taal is located along the Tagaytay Ridge Road in Laurel, Batangas. Call 0918-9670800.

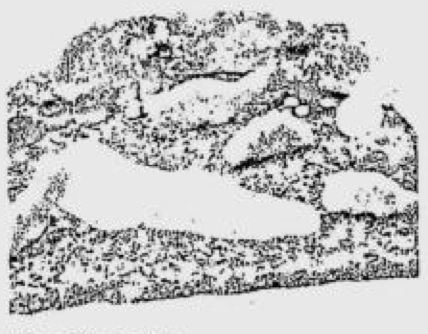


CHEFS Ed Quimson and Tristan Bayani

Learning made fun and delicious



PUREFOODS Chicken Fun Nuggets



REMEMBER THE ALPHABET SOUP? What about animal-shaped crackers? For some time now, experts have cited the effectiveness of food as a means of teaching children about the world around them, especially during their formative years.

Unfortunately, a quick visit to the village supermarket these days will tell you that there are few—if at all—local food products available.

Recognizing the importance of early learning and how food can play a role in the early development of children, the Purefoods-Hormel Company, Inc. recently took its popular Purefoods Chicken Fun Nuggets and launched a new innovation: early learning through educational chicken nugget shapes.

"Purefoods Chicken Fun Nuggets have always been popular among kids because of its delicious taste and crunchy breading. Parents, on the other hand, want it for their kids because it is packed with protein, has no preservatives, and is a good source of fiber. We want to take advantage of the product's popularity to help cultivate children's creativity and imagination through fun, educational shapes," says brand manager Donna Nebre.

Early this year, the brand released Purefoods Chicken Fun Nuggets Dino Buddies, which features a constant object of kids' interest and fascination: dinosaurs.

"Playing and eating are traditionally two things that the generation of our parents did not mix. But today, younger and more progressive-thinking parents will agree that meal times provide a good opportunity to teach children," Nebre says.

"The key is to turn meal times into fun, enjoyable, and delicious learning experiences. We hope our educational shapes can somehow help parents achieve this goal," she adds.

Aside from launching its educational shapes, the brand has also extended its advocacy for early learning to kid-centered summer activities.

It recently signed on as sponsor of Repertory Philippines' kiddie-centered projects. This includes the group's summer acting workshop. The brand is also sponsoring some of the renowned theater group's major kiddie productions for the year.

SINGKIT
THE GREAT NEW YORK TAKE OUT
Chicken Congee
Pork Congee
Chicken Noodles
Fish Tofu Noodles
Pork Noodles
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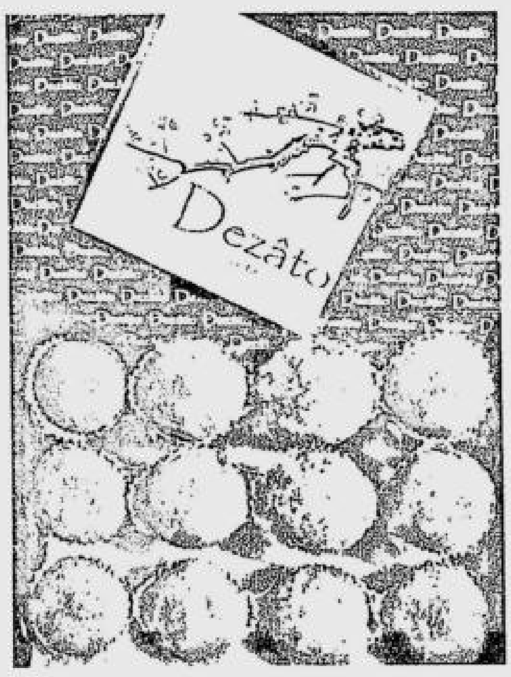
Harbour Square, CCP Complex, Manila 833-5750
PANCAKE HOUSE GROUP
DINE-IN or DELIVERY

Healthy breakfast

GARDENIA'S HONEY OAT LOAF MAY help moms ensure that their families get healthy meals. Developed in partnership with Quaker Oats, Gardenia Honey Oat Loaf combines all the nutritional values of honey and oats in one. Honey is believed to raise levels of protective antioxidant compounds in humans, while oats are rich in soluble fiber that helps reduce cholesterol. Oats are also rich in protein and complex carbohydrates. In recommending the new bread, Gardenia's nutritionist also stressed that people should not miss breakfast, the most important meal of the day.



DON'T you just love Mochi?

WHITE lotus flowers are available at the Lucban farm of Sambo and Becky Santos.

Good news about food and then some

From page C1

lo to Sostanza! Call 4390603 or 0917-8815248. Alvin does consultations for fitness and wellness, too.

Chewy treat

Don't you just love Mochi? If you like chewing on things that "stick" to your teeth, you must try these sweet Japanese rice cakes stuffed with milk, peanut butter and white chocolate truffles! Call 7271229. Thanks to Maiki for this discovery.

Like all families, we celebrated Mother's Day. After lunch, I invited Quattrocento, the band of Rico Puno's son, Rox Puno, to sing for us. I highly recommend the band, which also includes Adonis Tabanda and Fred Cortez, for intimate functions. It's so comforting to know there are people who still sing real music… "Change the World," "Smiling Face," OPM (original Pilipino music) hits. Fantastic vocal harmony! Call 0920-9137003.

Tropical blooms

My brother Boy and his friends from Ateneo's Class '70 paid tribute to their parents at Restaurant 9501. They handed out beautiful bouquets to their parents. Some consisted of tropical blooms while others of lotus. The white lotus flowers were so beautiful! Quite difficult to find but, fortunately, our good friends Sambo (also Class '70) and Becky Santos grow them at their Lucban farm. Call 042-5407822 for all your tropical flower needs—bromeliads (both cut and potted), pineapples, birds of paradise, lotus, etc. at wholesale prices.

E-mail the author at raspiras@inquirer.com.ph

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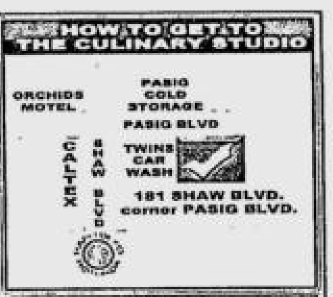

Sylvia Reynoso-Gala
Gold Medalist, Academia de Gastronomos, Madrid, Spain – 1964
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied in 6 Cooking Schools in Hongkong

Morella Reynoso Gala
Valedictorian, I.H.M.E.S. International Hotel School, United Kingdom – 1992
Studied Cooking at Le Cordon Bleu, London
ALSO TEACHES AT # 25 GLADIOLA ST. UPPER Q.M., BAGUIO CITY TEL. # (074) 444-8844

Ernest Reynoso Gala
Graduate : Italian Institute for Advanced Culinary & Pastry Arts under Chef Director John Nocita, Soverato, Calebria, Italy
Graduate : Le Moulin de Mougins Alain Llorca, Cannes, France
Graduate : Ecole Ritz Escoffier, Paris Ritz Hotel, France
Graduate : Ecole Lenotre Pattisserie, Plaisir Cedex, France
Graduate : Full Course at Thai Cooking School, Oriental Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand
Studied at Chopstick and Hongkong Town Gas Culinary Schools

MAY 24 THU 1:30 - 5:30PM - NEW SOUPS & SEAFOOD COURSE. BY ERNEST. P1,800. SHRIMP CHOWDER; FRENCH ONION SOUP; NEW ENGLAND CLAM CHOWDER; PRAWNS THERMIDOR; CHARCOAL-GRILLED TUNA BELLY W/ TERIYAKI SAUCE; POACHED WHOLE TUNA W/ HERB MAYO. PLUS 10 BONUS RECIPES OF SUPER GOOD SAUCES FOR FISH & SEAFOOD!

MAY 25 FRI 1:30 - 5:00PM - OPEN A COZY KOREAN RESTAURANT. LEARN TO MAKE THESE KOREAN SPECIALTIES: KIMCHI; SPINACH SALAD; MIXED RICE W/ KOREAN BEEF; BEAN SPROUTS; KOREAN PORK BARBECUE; DEEP-FRIED BEEF IN SKEWERS; CRAB & PORK FRIED RICE; KOREAN STYLE SOTANGHON; OJINGKO POKUM (SQUIDS IN HOT SAUCE); ROSE KUI; KOREAN BEEF STEW TOPPED RICE. PLUS KITCHEN-TESTED BONUS RECIPES. P1,680. BY SYLVIA

MAY 26 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - OPEN A PIZZA PARLOR - LEARN TO MAKE THESE ITALIAN FAVORITES. MOZARELLA-TOPPED BIG & THICK CRUST PIZZA (BAKED IN A RECTANGULAR PAN); THIN CRUST PIZZA W/ DIFF. TOPPINGS; FETTUCINE ALFREDO; SPAGHETTI CARBONARA; BREADED VEAL STEAKS W/ LEMON; PEACH-FILLED CREPES W/ FRUIT SAUCE. PLUS 12 BONUS RECIPES OF PASTAS & SANDWICHES. P1,800. BY ERNEST

MAY 28 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - 6 INDIVIDUAL SIZED EUROPEAN CAKES & DESSERTS 2. BY ERNEST. P1,800. MINI BUNDT CAKES DRENCHED IN ORANGE SYRUP BUTTERSCOTCH CAKES W/ CARAMELIZED TOPPING; LITTLE CHOCO CAKES W/ HOT FUDGE; UNBELEVABLY GOOD BANANA LOAF CAKE; SMALL CARROT CAKES W/ CHEESE TOPPING ; ITALIAN PUDDING IN CUSTARD CUPS. ALL LEARNED IN EUROPE!

MAY 29 TUES 1:30 - 5:00PM - 7 NEW BREAKFAST FOR THE HOME OR RESTAURANTS. P1,680. BY ERNEST & SYLVIA. BAKED HAM & CHEESE FLORENTINE; BAKED HEARTY SPANISH OMELET, SAUSAGE, EGGS, MAGNOLIA CHEESE CASSEROLE; FRIED SCOTCH EGGS W/ HUNT'S TOMATO SAUCE; EGGS IN A NEST; FRENCH MUSHROOM & MAGNOLIA CHEESE OMELETTE W/ MUSHROOM SAUCE; FRENCH TOAST STUFFED W/ MAGNOLIA MOZARELLA COOKED IN MAGNOLIA FRESH MILK AND MAGNOLIA GOLD BUTTER. ALL HEARTY & YUMMY!

MAY 30 WED 1:30 - 4:30PM - NOT TOO SPICY, AUTHENTIC, EASY THAI NOODLES, RICE, DESSERTS III - 9 (RECIPES), THAI STREET NOODLES; PAD THAI; CURRIED NOODLES WITH BEEF; CRAB FRIED RICE; PORK FRIED RICE; BLACK RICE PUDDING; TAPIOCA PUDDING; THAI CUSTARDS, SQUASH W/ COCONUT CREAM. P1,800. BY ERNEST.

MAY 31 WED 1:30 - 5:00PM - POPULAR JAPANESE DISHES II - LEARN 8 DELICIOUS RECIPES! SHABU-SHABU W/ 2 SAUCES, ASSORTED CRISPY TEMPURA; GRILLED PORK & BEEF SLICE; UDON (VERY SPECIAL NOODLES) FRIED TOFUS IN SPECIAL SAUCE; BREADED CHICKEN WINGS WITH VINEGAR SAUCE; JAPANESE MIXED FRIED RICE. PLUS BONUS RECIPES OF COMPLETE SUSHI BAR P1,680. BY SYLVIA.

JUNE 1 FRI 1:30 - 5:00PM - 8 JUMBO COOKIES & BAR I - WHITE PLATTER SIZED COOKIES; PEANUT BUTTER JUMBOS; BIGGIE FRISBEE COOKIES; CHOCO OATMEAL COOKIES; REVEL BARS; MACADAMIA NUT BARS; DECADENT BROWNIES; SUPER FUDGY BROWNIES. P1,800. BY ERNEST.

JUNE 2 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - 5 NEW CLASSIC ITALIAN PASTAS COURSE. BY ERNEST. P1,800 - BEEF LASAGNA LAYER W/ MONTEREY MEAT RED & WHITE SAUCES, CANELLONI (BIG ROLLS OF MEAT & VEGGIES FILLED PASTA) BAKED IN CHEESE SAUCE, BONELESS MAGNOLIA CHICKEN LASAGNA BAKED IN LAYERS OF CREAM SAUCE, CENTURY TUNA EGGPLANT LASAGNA (LAYER OF EGGPLANT & PASTA W/ TUNA, MAGNOLIA PARMESAN & MOZZARELLA CHEESE W/ HUNT'S SPAGHETTI SAUCE), RIGATONI BIG MACARONI W/ SHRIMP, ITALIAN SAUSAGE IN CREAMY SAUCE.

JUNE 7 THU 1:30 - 5:00PM - CHINESE COOKING; PATA TIM (BRAISED PORK SHOULDER) SPICED CHILI CRABS; PATO TIM (BRAISED DUCK W/ VEGETABLES), SWEET & SOUR PORK; YANCHOW FRIED RICE, SPICY PRAWNS, CANDIED BANANAS DIPPED IN ICE. P1,680. BY SYLVIA

JUNE 8 FRI 1:30 - 5:15PM - 9 GUARANTEED SPECIAL COOKIES AND BARS II. BY ERNEST, P1,800. MISSISSIPPI MUD BARS, ROCKY ROAD BROWNIES; CHUNKY OATMEAL BARS; HEAVENLY DATE BARS, PEANUT BUTTER BROWNIES; MARSHMALLOW COOKIES; RICOA CHOCO IN FLAKY CUPS; PANDAN CRESCENTS; RUM BALLS

JUNE 9 FRI 1:30 - 5:00PM - 6 NEW INTERNATIONAL MEAT LOVERS COURSE. BY ERNEST. P1,800. ITALIAN MONTEREY BEEF SHANKS W/ HUNT'S GRAVY & PASTA (OSSO BUCO); DANISH FRUIT STUFFED MONTEREY PORK ROAST; AMERICAN STYLE BAKED MONTEREY BEEF TENDERLOIN BARBECUE; SOUTHERN STYLE AMERICAN FINGER LICKIN MONTEREY PORK SPARERIBS; GERMAN MEATBALLS W/ CREAMY CAPER SAUCE & PASTA, BAKED ARGENTINA BEEF MAC W/ CORN & CHEESE.

JUNE 14 THU 1:30 - 5:00PM - PUT UP A STEAK HOUSE. LEARN THE TECHNIQUES TO COOKING THE JUICIEST MONTEREY PORTERHOUSE STEAKS; BEEF TENDERLOIN STEAK ALA POBRE; DELICIOUS HOMEMADE GRAVY, CAESAR SALAD; ROAST ORANGE PORK LOIN; BEST SELLING BAKED SPAGHETTI WITH 2 SAUCES; MAKE YOUR OWN CREPES SAMURAI. BY ERNEST. P1,800.

JUNE 15 FRI 1:30 - 5:00PM - MAX'S STYLE FRIED CHICKEN. JOLLIBEE STYLE CHICKEN W/ GRAVY - CHICKEN BURGER , DELICIOUS POATO SALD; SIZZLING GRILLED PORK CHOPS; FOUR SEASONS PUNCH, RIPE MANGO, MELON TAPIOCA W/ SAGO, GREEN MANGO JUICE P1,680. BY SYLVIA

JUNE 16 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - 7 NEW FISH COURSE BY ERNEST & SYLVIA - P1,680. SALMON STEAKS W/ EGG SAUCE; POACHED SALMON W/ DILL SAUCE; FLAKED CENTURY PINK SALMON IN PASTRY (SALMON COULIBAC) W/ MIXED VEGETABLES; SALMON STEAKS W/ GARLICKY WHITE SAUCE; CENTURY TUNA MEAT LOAF; TUNA RICE PAELLAS. ALL SERVED W/ DELICIOUS KANI (JAPANESE CRABSTICK) CUCUMBER SALAD IN CREAMY DRESSING.

JUNE 19 TUE 1:30 - 5:45PM - 7 NEW AUTHENTIC ITALIAN BREAD & PASTA. BY ERNEST. P1,800. SOFT BREAD STICKS; FOCACCIA; CIABATTA; SAUSAGE CALZONE (TURN OVERS); STROMBOLI; SPAGHETTI CON VONGOLE (CLAMS); SPAGHETTI CON POLPETTE ALLA CASALINGA (GOLF BALL SIZED MEATBALLS). IDEAL PIZZA PARLOR OWNERS & STAFF.

JUNE 20 WED 1:30 - 5:00PM - MERIENDA FARE THE BEST, NEW RECIPE: PANCIT PALABOK, LUMPIANG UBOD W/ HOMEMADE UBE & EGG WRAPPERS, LUMPIANG SHANGHAI, PINSEC FRITO, MINI FRUIT CAKE BARS, SARAP-BAKED COCOROONS. P1,680. BY SYLVIA.

JUN 21 THU 1:30 - 5:00PM - 2 KINDS OF ROASTBEEF - MONTEREY STANDING RIB ROAST & BACON WRAPPED BONELESS ROAST W/ GRAVY; CREMA DE FRUTA; SIZZLING SHIMPS IN GARLIC SAUCE; FRIED SQUID RINGS, CHICKEN ALEXANDER, SEAFOOD MEDLEY SOUP; SERVED IN CRUSTY BREAD BOWL FROM FRENCH BAKER. P1,800. BY ERNEST

JUN 22 FRI 1:30 - 5:00PM - VERY SPECIAL WELL LOVED FILIPINO DISHES & SWEETS 1 - SUPER SARAP NA PANCIT MOLO, KARE-KARE NI ATCHING LENI; MECHADO; GUINATAANG MAIS; GUIA'S ILOILO RICE PUTO; CRISPY KANGKONG W/ 3 DIPS; UKOY ESPECIAL. P1,680. BY SYLVIA

JUN 23 SAT 1:30 - 5:00PM - AUTHENTIC ITALIAN RESTAURANT COOKING COURSE 2 - BY ERNEST. P1,800. VERY DELICIOUS SICILIAN SALAD W/ CREAMY GARLIC DRESSING; STUFFED MUSHROOMS W/ ITALIAN SAUSAGE, BASIL, TOMATOES, MOZZARELLA IN WHITE SAUCE; FONDUTA (CHEESE DIP W/ BREAD TRIANGLES); GRILLED HUGE MONTEREY PORK CHOPS W/ MARSALA; PAN FRIED TENDER MONTEREY LAMB CHOPS W/ GARLIC-BAKED TOMATOES, BABY CARROTS, POTATOES, CAPERS & GREEN OLIVES. YOU WILL LOVE THESE FAMILY STYLE RECIPES!

JUN 26 TUE 1:30 - 5:15PM - LEARN THE SOFTEST SIOPAO DOUGH EVER! THE MOST DELICIOUS SIOMAI; KUA PAO (PEKING SIOPAO W/ MEAT & PICKLED MUSTASA); FISH HEAD SOUP; CAMARON RELLENADO; QUIKIAM W/ RADISH SALAD, STEAMED LAPU-LAPU. P1,680. BY SYLVIA

JUN 27 WED 1:30 - 5:15PM - LIGHT & AIRY ENSAYMADAS. CHEESE ROLLS; SPECIAL EGG PANDESAL, PANDESAL W/ FILLING; CINNAMON ROLLS. BREAD BAKING MADE EASY! P1,680. BY SYLVIA

JUN 28 THU 1:30 5:00PM THE BEST OVEN-BAKED PAELLA - ROAST STUFFED MAGNOLIA JUMBO CHICKEN; PASTEL DE LENGUA; CALLOS MADRILEÑA; BLACK FOREST #2. IDEAL FOR CATERERS & PARTY GIVERS. P1,680. BY SYLVIA

VISIT OUR WEBSITE
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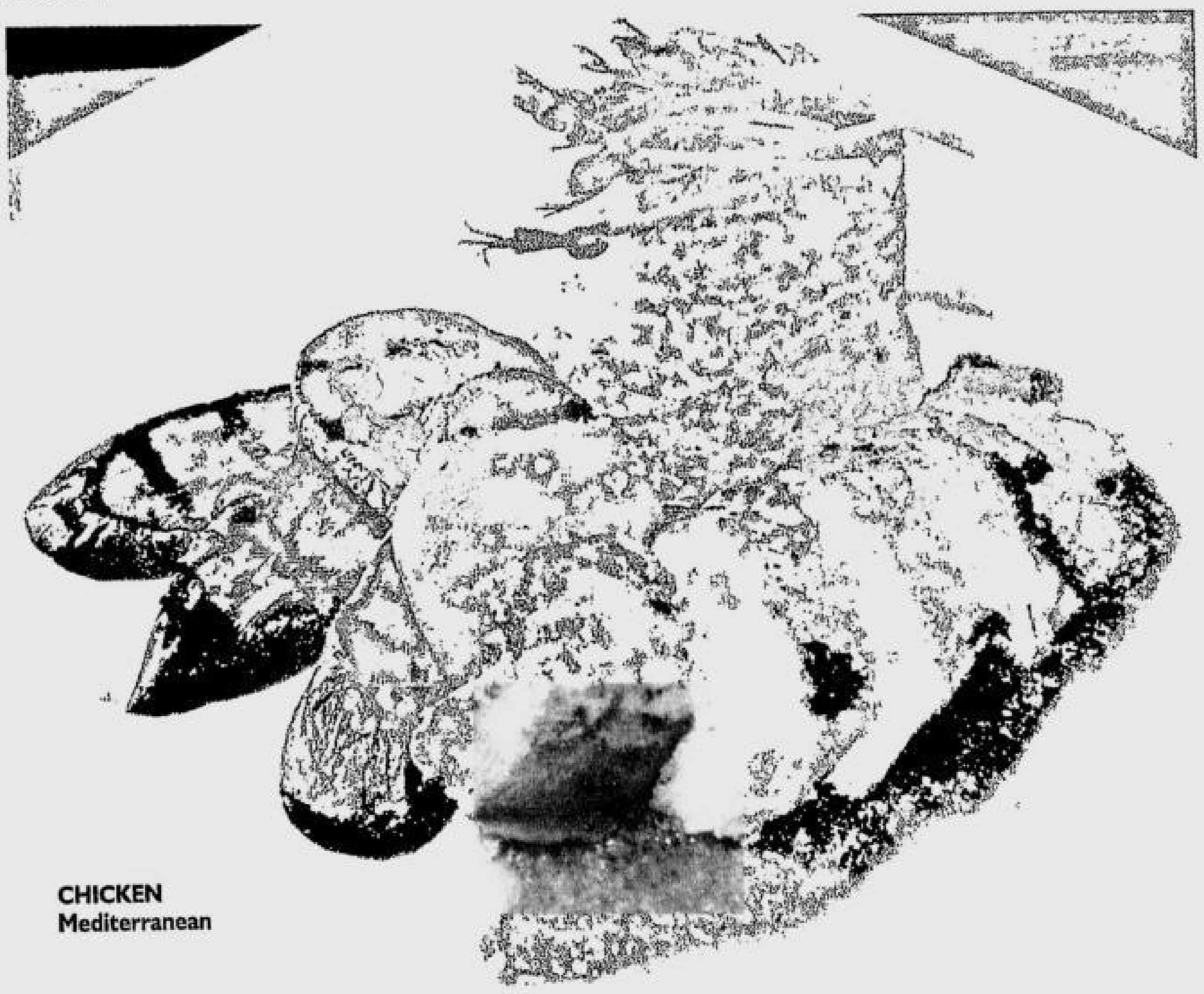
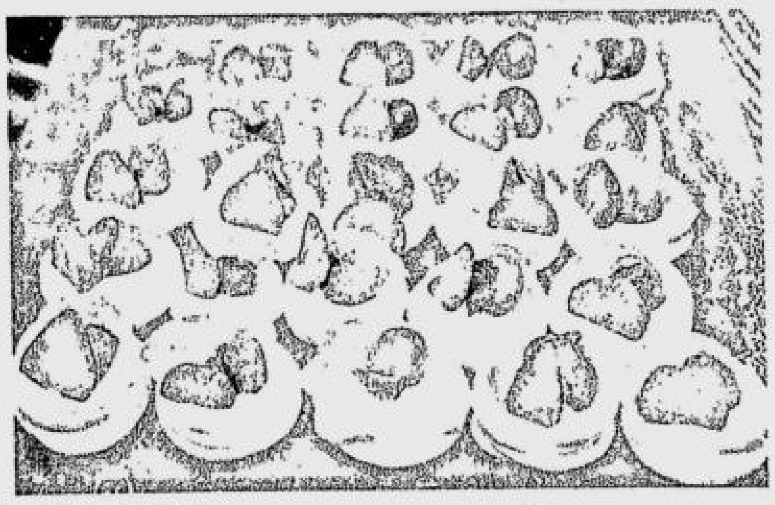
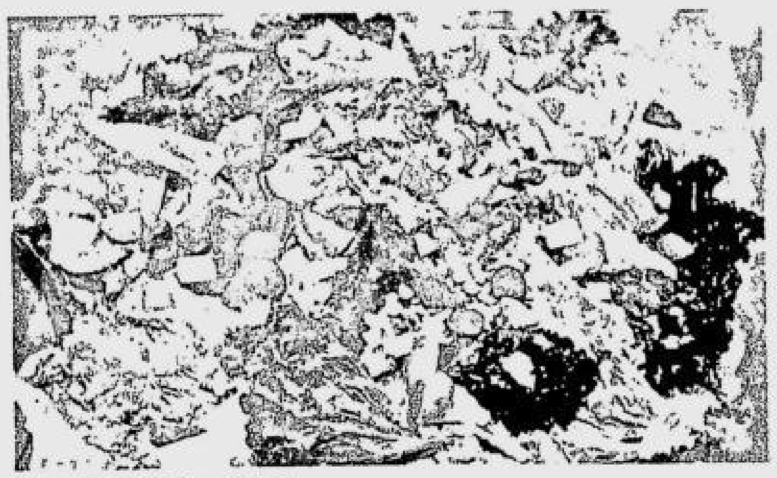


CHICKEN Mediterranean



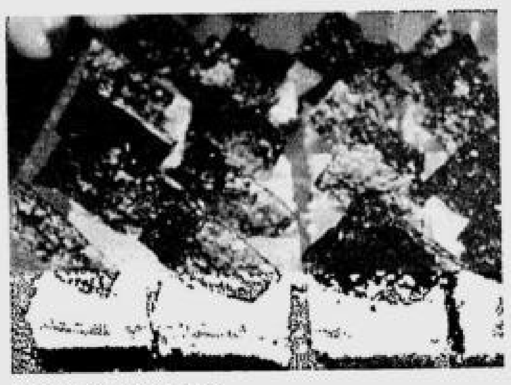
SKINNY Pavlova



FRUIT and Walnut Salad

Spa Cuisine simply means light, fresh natural foods that are low in fat and calories

De-stress by eating



TOFU Cheesecake

CHEF Iñigo Castillo and Badgie Guerrero-Trinidad, CCA general manager

C3 RESTAURANT'S classy and cozy interiors make for an intimate dining experience.

Text by Vangie Baga-Reyes
Photos by Ryan Lim

PEOPLE WHO THINK ONLY A soothing body massage can help them de-stress should try the Spa Cuisine of C3 Restaurant.

Conceptualized by the chefs of the Center for Culinary Arts, Manila (CCA), Spa Cuisine simply means light, fresh natural foods that are low in fat and calories.

Emphasis is on whole grains, fresh fruits and vegetables, lean proteins, and low-fat dairy products. No added or artificial salts, colors, flavors, or preservatives.

The C3 restaurant stresses the importance of low-fat, balanced diet to health, weight and well-being. So, aside from using natural ingredients, the Spa Cuisine lets diners eat healthy and, at the same time, be soothed by the flavor and presentation of each dish.

"People these days are into healthy eating. Food can be healthy and palatable at the same time," says Iñigo Castillo, who runs the C3 restaurant with CCA chefs Menoy Gimenez and Martha Ebro.

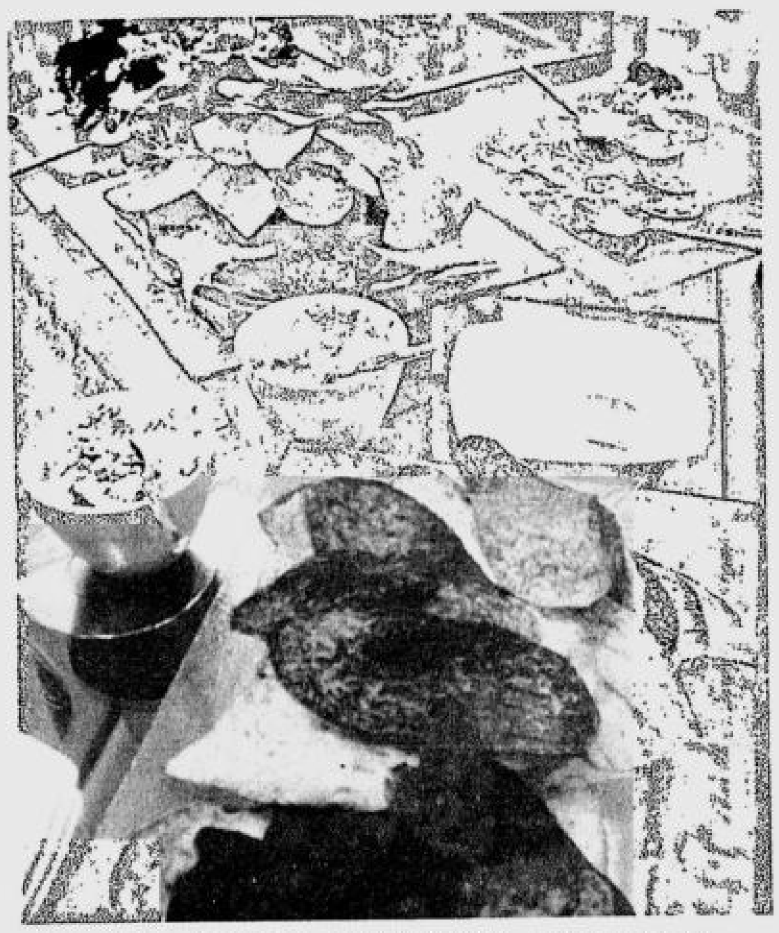
"We use non-saturated fats instead of animal fats. We use only olive or canola oil. Our cooking methods, like grilling or poaching or steaming, rely less on fats. We keep the natural flavor of the ingredients, enhancing it with our own style of cooking and flavoring," he says.

Spa plates

C3 chefs have meticulously prepared a selection of nourishing meals called Spa Plates that lets weight-watchers indulge without worrying about gaining pounds.

Seared Salmon Tranche (P550) is salmon served over miso-mirin broth and Asian slaw, while Tuna au Poivre (P495) is a pepper-crusted tuna steak with vegetable timbale and balsamic gastrique.

"Seafood makes for great spa food. It is easy to digest, low in kilojoules, high in protein and an excellent source of important minerals," says Castillo.



BRUSCHETTA with three dips: eggplant caviar, tzatziki and hummus

But chicken lovers can ask for Chicken Mediterranean (P325), spice-rubbed chicken paillards with grilled vegetable salad and served with roasted tomato pilaf. It is cooked the Portuguese way with rich sauce, chili and sautéed in olive oil.

Grilled Pork Scalopinne (P425) is pork loin blended with puttanesca sauce and grilled vegetables.

"We use pork but it doesn't mean it's unhealthy. Pork in the United States is referred to as the new white meat. And we use loin so it's very lean," explains Castillo.

For salad eaters, Salad Fruit De Mer (P375), French for fruits of the sea, may be a good choice. With chilled lemon vinaigrette for dressing, paper-thin salmon, poached shrimps and mussels with baby greens, asparagus and cherry tomatoes are tossed together.

TUNA au Poivre

Those who follow the South Beach Diet may also find that Spa Plates conform to their regimen. "There's very little starch so it can be an alternative meal," says Castillo.

To complement the Spa Plates, there's a refreshing line of Spa Drinks, including Banana Key Lime Freeze, Cucumber Mint Mojito, Yogurt Papaya Smoothie, Frozen Watermelon Margarita, Tropical Mango Slush and Coco-Lychee Piña Colada.

The Spa Cuisine is available until June. C3 restaurant, which opened only three months ago to complement its mother venue, the C3 Events Place on Missouri St., North Greenhills, San Juan, also has a regular menu for those who prefer rich Continental food.

Among its bestsellers are Pave of Pork, which is fork-tender braised belly of pork with truffled mashed potatoes, sweet balsamic reduction and enriched demiglaze; and Poulet Aromatique, sautéed Caribbean rubbed chicken fillet with fresh mango-basil salsa, chamomile rice pilaf and Harisa crème.

Appetizers include Tomato Carpaccio, thin slices of vine-ripened tomatoes with cheese fritters, balsamic vinaigrette, cracked pepper, flaky salt and fresh basil salad; Fruit and Walnut Salad, and Melon Gazpacho.

Desserts range from Flourless Chocolate Cake, Brioche Bread Pudding to Crepe Suzette and Tofu Cheesecake.

The Spa Cuisine is also offered to those who book a Spa Party Theme for bridal showers, birthdays, cocktail parties or corporate events at C3 Events Place (tels. 7262712 or 7232347).

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph

Some like it hot

DINING OUT

CROWNE PLAZA GALLERIA MANILA'S Xin Tian Di restaurant is holding the Chinese Sichuan Food Festival until June 3. Sichuan cuisine is one of the Eight Great Cuisines in China, famous all over the world for its richness and variety. The province is also the birthplace of tea. Guest chefs from Sichuan—Qinghua Tan, Rong Zang, Zhengqing Den and Daiwen Liu—are participating in the festival. Xin Tian Di is at the 4/L of Crowne Plaza.

SUPER BOWL of China's Super Servings, for 8-12 persons, lets families and friends savor big portions of the restaurant's Cantonese fare at reasonable prices. The Super Servings menu includes Lemon Chicken (P450), Sweet and Sour Pork (P495), Honey Glazed Pork Ribs (P520), Sliced Beef with Broccoli (P550), Deep-fried Cuttlefish with Spicy Salt (P570). Other must-try dishes include Sweet and Sour Fish Fillet (P490); Sauteed Fresh Szechuan Scallops (P590) in chili sauce with mushrooms, peanuts and mixed vegetables; Fish Fillet with Taosi Sauce (P490); and Szechuan Shrimp (P750).

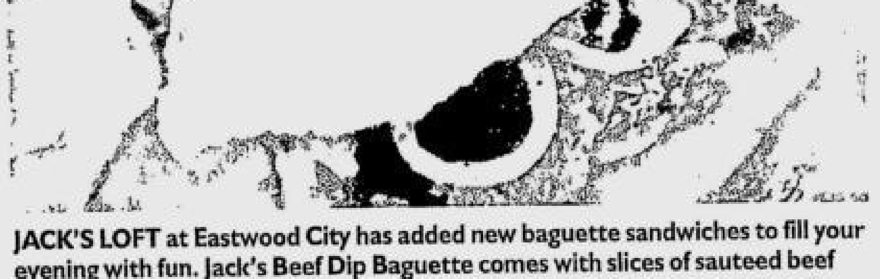
THE METCAFÉ by Ilustrado features a bamboo menu for the ongoing Metropolitan Museum of Manila's bamboo exhibit "Lawiswis: Mga Kwento ng Buhay Mula sa Kawayan." The bamboo dishes will be available until July 6, last day of the exhibition. The Metcafé's healthy bamboo dishes include salad of *labong*, carrots, sweet potato and jicama in coco cream vinaigrette; fresh *lumpiang labong*; chicken *binakol*; *binumbong na adobo* with rice, tomatoes and salted egg; and grilled prawns with coco sauce in bamboo shoots. The Metcafé (tel. 5211517; www.metmuseum.ph) is at the 1/F Lobby of Metropolitan Museum of Manila inside the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Complex on Roxas Boulevard.

PALOMA Modern Spanish Bistro (6/F, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, tel. 9104096) offers traditional Spanish favorites like Lengua Sevillana and Chicken Ajillo, Beef Salpicao and Grilled Freshwater Prawns Duet. Also available are Cacao Chicken Roast, Almondigas Orientale and Manchego Cheese Triangles. More adventurous diners can try Salpicao del Rey (ostrich *salpicao*) and Crispy Braised Quail in Apple Sauce. The restaurant also offers Callos Catalana.

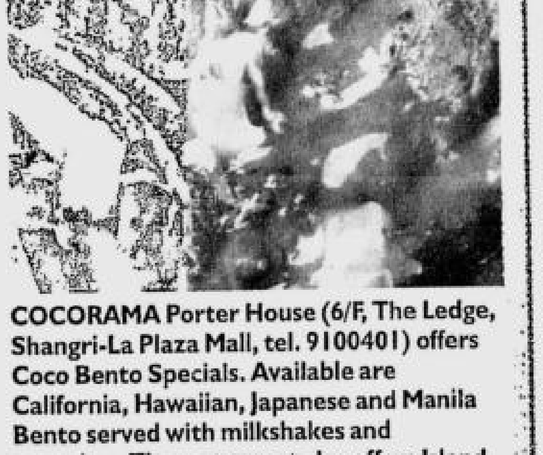
LA SOLERA offers authentic Spanish cuisine like Paella, Callos ala Madrileña, Cangrejos Pescado en Salsa Verde, Bacalao ala Vizcaina, Zarzuela de Mariscos, Langostinos ala Thermidor, Almejas en Salsa Verde, Fidegoa, and the house specialty Cochinillo Stuffed with Paella (tel. 4101943).

POQUITO MAS', specializing in Spanish, Latino and Filipino cuisine, features barbecue nights all weekends of the month. Plus, hear acoustic groups every Friday and enjoy the 4+1 promo on San Miguel Beer Pale Pilsen and San Mig Light. Poquito Mas' is at Westgate Center, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa. Call 7711334 or 7711325.

TRAVEL LOUNGE, a few minutes away from the international airport, is designed like an airline's business class. Operated by Travel Cooperative of the Philippines, its specialties include Paella Marinera, Crispy Turo, Callos ala Madrileña, Gambas Ajillo and Tapa de Baka. Robert Lim Joseph and Johnny Midnight, the men behind Travel Lounge, will also give diners a few tips on wine. Travel Lounge is at 2253 RLJ Compound, Tramo Road, Pasay.

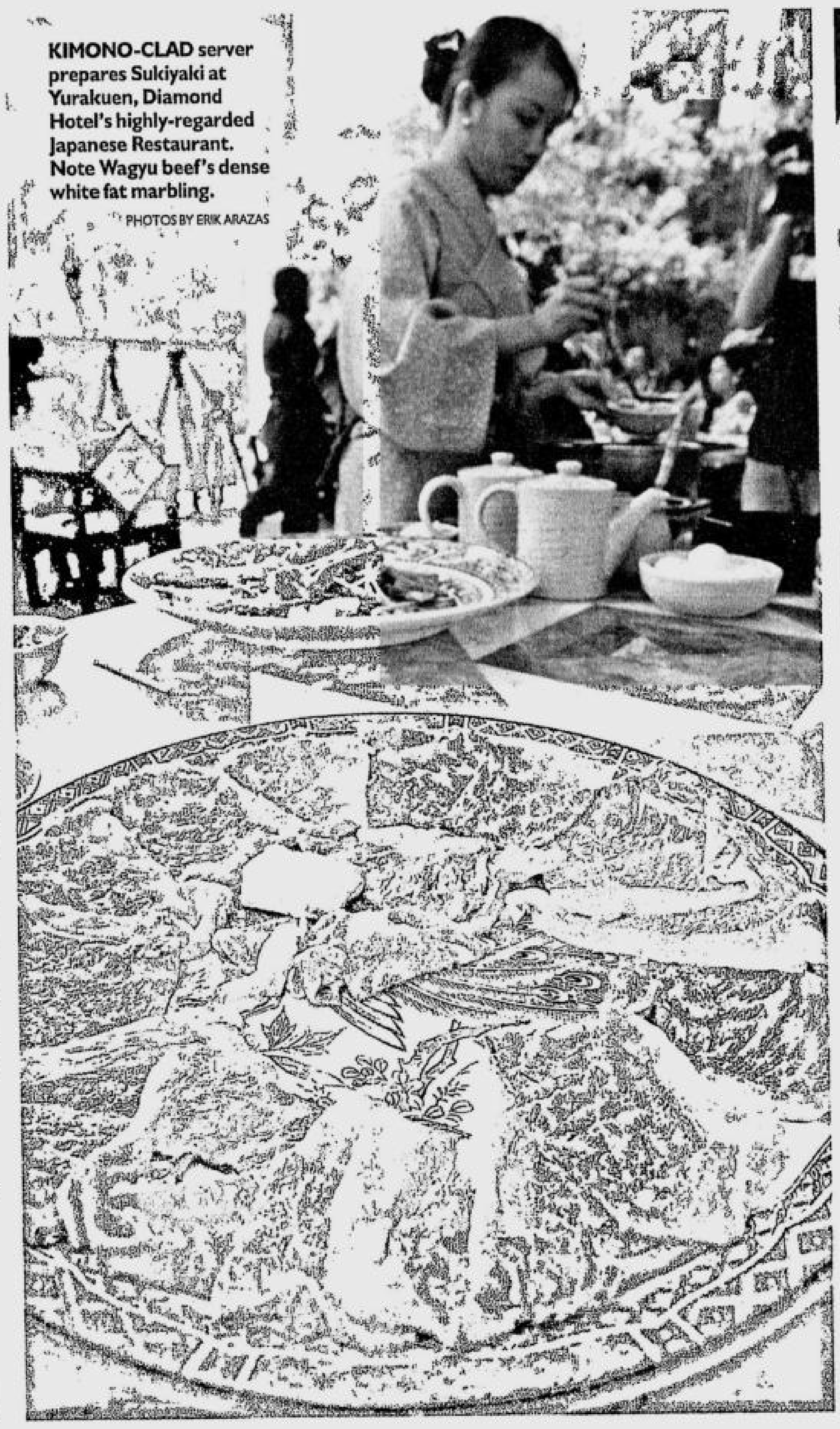


JACK'S LOFT at Eastwood City has added new baguette sandwiches to fill your evening with fun. Jack's Beef Dip Baguette comes with slices of sauteed beef and onions, served with potato chips and au jus dip. It can be paired with the Red Bandana, strawberry banana smoothie (tel. 4212048 or text 0917-8EWCITY).



COCORAMA Porter House (6/F, The Ledge, Shangri-La Plaza Mall, tel. 9100401) offers Coco Bento Specials. Available are California, Hawaiian, Japanese and Manila Bento served with milkshakes and pancakes. The restaurant also offers Island Specials like Chicken Teriyaki Dinner Plate, US Angus Tapa, Teriyaki Ribs, El Bimbo and Tony Manero's Pork Chop. Taco Rama includes Chiquito, Big Island Jumbo Taco, El Paso Grilled Chicken Wrap, Mexican Omelet in Tortilla Wrap and The Caesar Hustle. Other favorites include Island Pasta Bamboo, Omelets and French Toast Combo Plates, Groovy Waffles, Cocorama Torpedos, Scooby's Steaks and Chops, Pancake Stacks.

BEHOLD the P120,000 dinner. Executive chef Jean-Pierre Migne presents Beluga Caviar, Mousseline of Avocado, Black Truffle Soup Elysee, Melon Sorbet, Matsusaka Beef Tenderloin and Morel Mushroom stuffed with Goose Liver, Mango and Crème Brulée Napoleon.



KIMONO-CLAD server prepares Sukiyaki at Yurakuen, Diamond Hotel's highly-regarded Japanese Restaurant. Note Wagyu beef's dense white fat marbling.

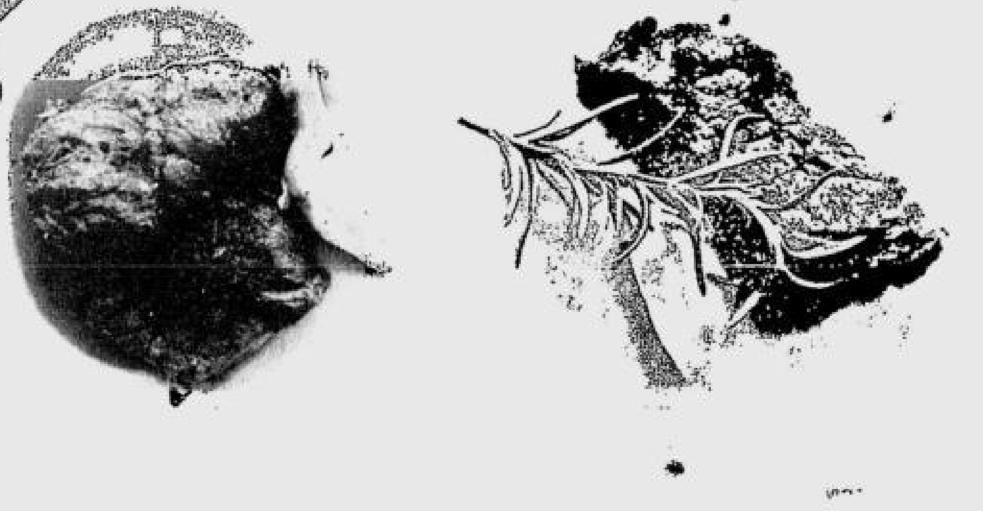
PHOTOS BY ERIK ARAZAS

BLACK Cheek Beef and Wagyu Burger at Palm Court Café

Matsusaka beef dinner is included in Diamond Hotel's luxury package for two at P120,000

PAN Fried Wagyu Black Steak with seared scallops on Shiraz reduction, Wagyu Beef Tenderloin Steak

Do you Wagyu?



CHARCOAL Broiled Marinated Wagyu Gold Kalbi with spicy Texan BBQ sauce and Broiled Peppered Wagyu Rib-eye

CECILE Ang, Diamond Hotel's youthful president

A LOT OF PEOPLE DO, APPARENTLY, going by the huge turnout at the recent opening of the Wagyu Food Festival at the Diamond Hotel Philippines. Ongoing until June 30 at this hotel fronting the bay on Roxas Boulevard, the beef bash puts the spotlight on what was for the longest time Japan's exclusive domain and best kept gourmet secret.

Wagyu is a special breed of cattle first raised in Japan because its people are obsessive-compulsive about dining well yet eating lean and being healthy.

Wagyu beef is characterized by intense flavor and dense marbling, which results in a higher ratio of monounsaturated fats to saturated fats. Now even if you don't have the appetite for anything that is more than three syllables, try to digest this one: the multi-syllabled fats have lower cholesterol while the other kind is linked to heart disease.

Not the same

Some people use the designations "Wagyu beef" and "Kobe beef" interchangeably but that shouldn't be. True, all Kobe beef comes from the Wagyu breed, but the celebrity status of Kobe beef arises from its being a product of Wagyu cattle born, bred, fed and royally treated (as in massaged) in the prefecture of Kobe, Japan. So Kobe beef should not be confused with other Wagyu beef from Wagyu cattle that have been bred in the United States, Australia and Europe. In other words, Wagyu has to do with genes and Kobe, with place.

It is important to designate where the beef comes from, since some farms outside Japan have crossbred Wagyu cattle with other breeds. It had been acceptable for the international cattle industry to refer to beef with Wagyu genetics as "Wagyu" until last year when Japan's Ministry of Agriculture reportedly went on the warpath against any beef labeled as "Wagyu" that was actually from foreign-bred cattle.

TEPPANYAKI chef gives steak a quick sear in a flame.

Diamond Hotel's youthful president, Cecile Ang, obviously knows her Wagyu. "We use Japanese Wagyu at Yurakuen, US Snake River Farms Wagyu at Palm Court and both US and Japanese Wagyu at Bellevue," she very specifically notes of their outlets' offerings. (For a time, Snake River Farms sold all the Wagyu cattle they were raising to Japan. Now, they reportedly sell half of their Wagyu beef to Americans and other consumers.)

Luxury package

"We also have the premium Wagyu—Japanese Matsusaka beef—at Bellevue," adds Ang.

Matsusaka beef is offered as part of a luxury package for two being promoted by Diamond Hotel for P120,000, which includes a premium Wagyu dinner paired with a bottle of Chateau Margaux (or any premium wine of your choice) and an overnight stay in the Presidential Suite with breakfast in bed thrown in. Or P90,000 if minus the not-too-shabby sleeping quarters.

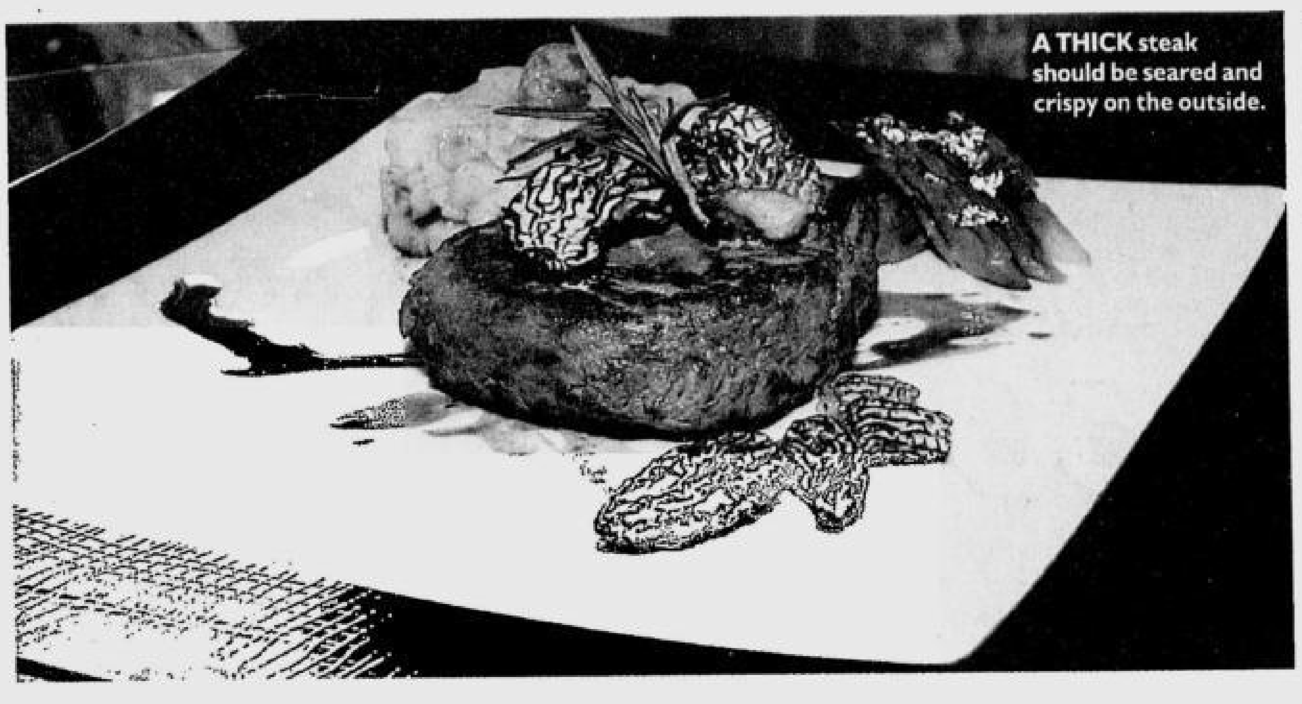
During the launch hosted by Carlos Celdran of the "walking tour" fame, a progressive lunch took the guests from one restaurant to another in the hotel, with each outlet serving two to four dishes made from the prized beef.

Until the end of June, Yurakuen is offering Japanese Premium Beef Sukiyaki or Shabu-Shabu course Teppanyaki Japanese Premium Sirloin and Teppanyaki Japanese Tenderloin steak.

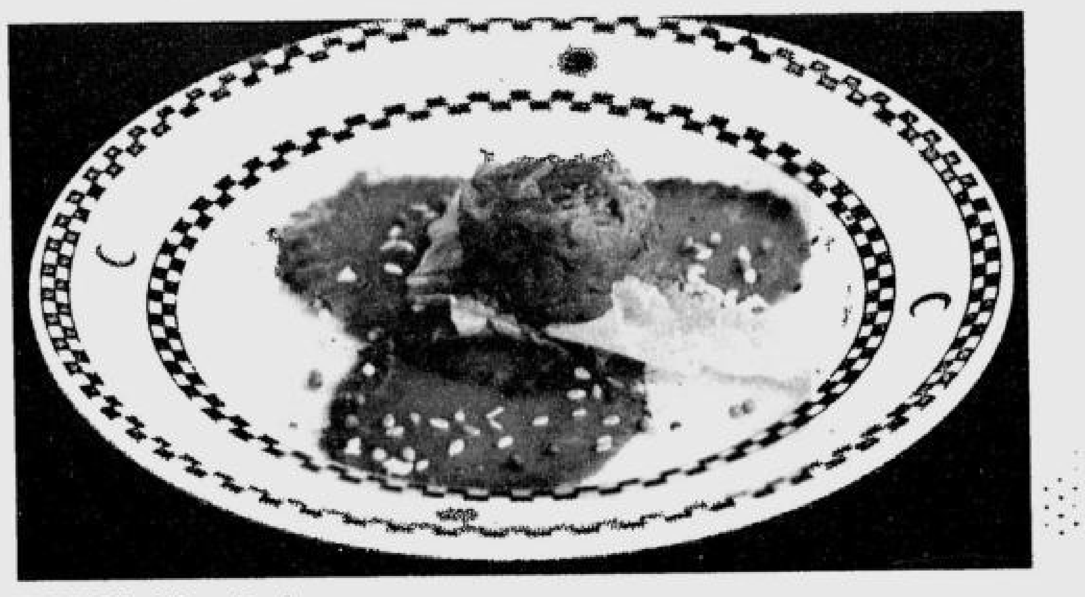
Palm Court's menu, on the other hand, includes Wagyu Burger served in toasted ciabatta olive bread with a side of onion rings, tomato jam and yellow mustard; Wagyu Black Cheek Beef, which is a braised sesame beef broth served on buckwheat noodles with vegetables; and Broiled Wagyu Black Zabuton Steak that comes with corn on the cob, French fries and orange-flavored BBQ sauce.

Restaurant Le Bellevue is going for a Euro-Continental cuisine consisting of Tartare of Wagyu Beef with roasted sesame and mustard seeds set on delectable slivers of Wagyu carpaccio; Broiled Wagyu Burger Steak served with goose liver on toasted cereal bread, sautéed mushrooms, herbed BBQ sauce and spicy potato wedges; Broiled Peppered Wagyu Rib-eye topped with creamy pepper sauce, baked polenta and vegetables; Pan Fried Wagyu Black Steak with seared scallops on Shiraz reduction, stir-fried vegetable balls and rice fritters; and Charcoal Broiled Marinated Wagyu served with corn on the cob, mushroom ragout and sauteed artichokes.

If you're unapologetically carnivorous, this rich and tender pedigreed beef will delight you. If you're not a good cook, Wagyu beef is too expensive to try to do on your own at home, so why not allow the Diamond Hotel culinary team to enthrall you? Call 5283000 or e-mail bizcenter@diamondhotel.com. *CBF*



A THICK steak should be seared and crispy on the outside.



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Japanese cooking made easy

EVER WONDERED WHY Japanese cuisine continues to be a hit even among the most discriminating food lovers? Find out as San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center holds a special cooking class dubbed "Japanese Cooking Made Easy II" featuring Tammy Takagi on May 25, 1:30-4:30 p.m. to be held at the San Miguel Purefoods Culinary Center, Legaspi cor. Eagle Sts., Barrio Ugong, Pasig. Enjoy preparing as well as sampling Sushi, Mixed Tempura, Kakiage Pork Misuyaki, Chawan Mushi, Tofu Steak and Don Buri (Rice Toppings). For a fee of P900, learn how to capture the flavor and style of presenting Japanese dishes. To avail of 20-percent discount, present My Great Food Club ID or P200 worth of single receipt purchases (until May 31) at San Miguel Food Shop, San Mig Café and Purefoods Market Shop for non-ID holders. Visit www.mygreatfood.com. Call 6322000 or 6719876 locals 2771 and 402.

Kobe of pork

The Reggie Aspiras School of Culinary Arts offers the following classes:

May 25: Kurobuta, "The Kobe of Pork—Pork Has Never Been This Good!—Melt in Your Mouth Slow-Roasted Garlic Kurobuta Pork Belly with Sauces; Kurobuta Porchetta (Italian-Style Roast Pork); The Best-Tasting Roast Prime Rib of Pork Ever Served with six sauces (Apple, Fruit Chutneys, Gravies); Sides

May 28: Cupcake Station—all new!—Cupcakes with Many Possibilities: Three Delicious Cupcake Bases with Out-of-this-world Frostings; 12 Delicious variations. Beautiful presentation! Bonus: Kona Coffee Concoctions

May 30: Steamed '07—all new!—Seabass Done Three Ways: Whole Steamed with Rice Wine Soy Sauce and Three Mushroom Saute; Honey Ginger and Sake Steamed with Green Onion and Ginger Pesto; Garlic-Steamed with Cilantro Soy Oil. Shiitake Chicken with Jasmine Soy Rice and Condiments; Delicious Clay Pot Rice; Baked Pork Ribs in Black Bean Sauce; Steamed Sponge Cake with Pandan Creme Anglaise.

New schedules for May to July are now available. Call 9289296 or 9273008.

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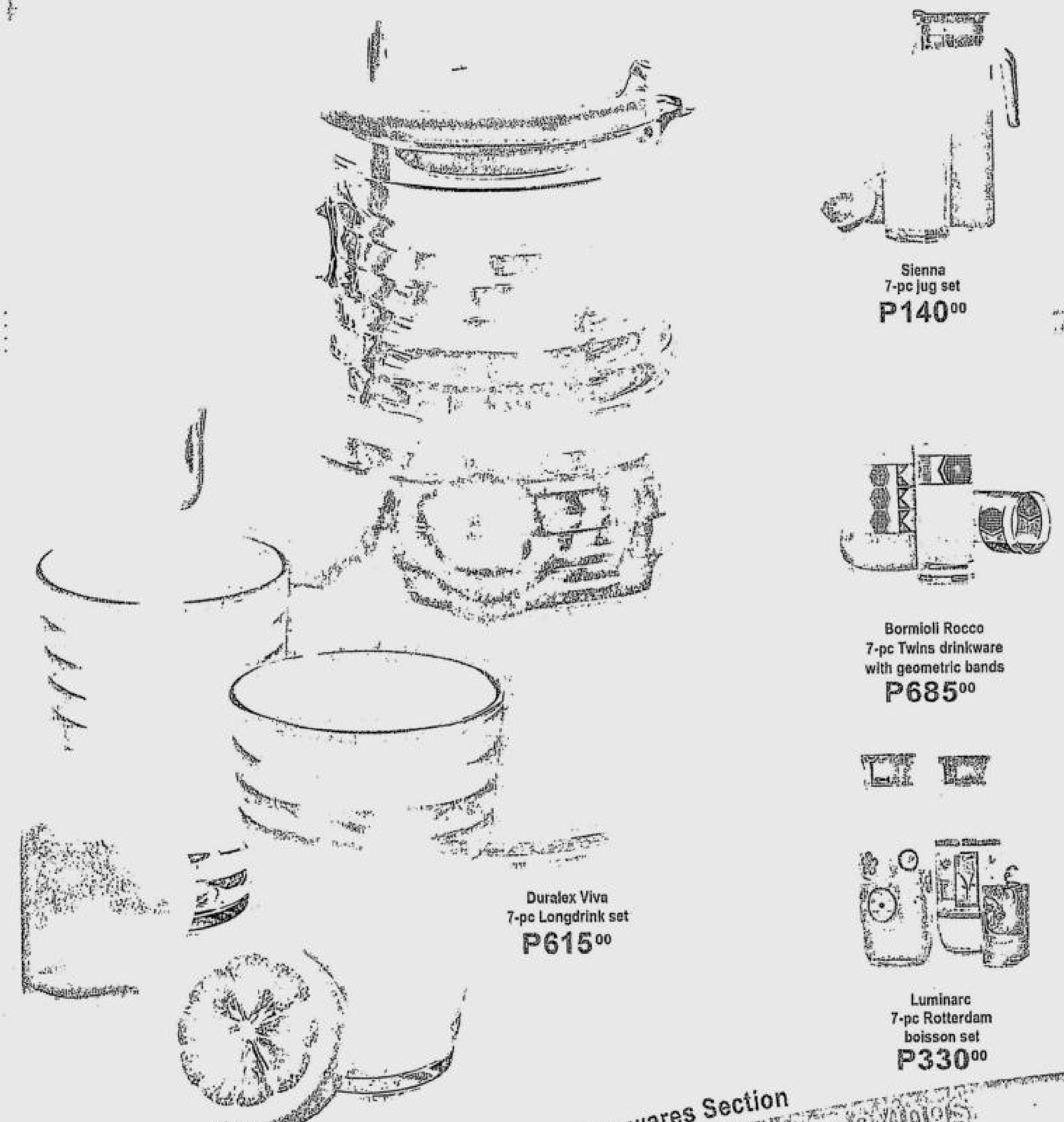

Sienna
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Zsazsa: I can never find another man like Dolphy

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

ALTHOUGH THE NEWS CAUGHT her by surprise, it didn't leave her tongue-tied. Singer-actress Zsazsa Padilla managed to joke about her rumored—for the nth time—separation from Dolphy.

"For a change, let's say yes," she told INQUIRER Entertainment in a phone interview. "But it was because I was isolated in a hospital, after I came down with a bad strain of the flu."

She said Dolphy had persuaded her to check herself in. "I don't like hospitals, but I reminded Dolphy that, should I get sick, he should force me."

She is confounded by recent intrigues. The worst one, she said, linked her to Tito Sotto, who's married to Helen Gamboa, aunt of her friend Sharon Cuneta.

"I didn't want to discuss it because it was so cheap," Zsazsa said.

She recalled that the last time she saw Tito was over two years ago, "when Fernando Poe Jr. was dying in the hospital."

She asked rhetorically, "Would Sharon send me a greeting for my birthday (May 28, but the greeting was aired earlier on a TV show) if there was something going on?"

She has treated that rumor with humor, Zsazsa said.

"Friends were kidding me—why didn't I get a younger man *daw*?"

Zsazsa and Dolphy, 36 years her senior, have been together for 18 years.

She turned serious, pointing out that Dolphy's a tough act to

ZSAZSA/ D4

Did You Know...

Snappers snap at Pam Anderson

PHOTOGRAPHERS at the Cannes Film Festival got back at US television star Pamela Anderson, who kept them waiting for more than an hour at a photo op to promote her latest movie "Blonde and Blonder" and then only stayed two minutes. The photographers booed her as she left. *Reuters*

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Regine didn't expect 'this reaction' to Ogie's tell-all

"WE DIDN'T ANTICIPATE THIS KIND OF reaction from the press," Regine Velasquez told reporters in a media conference on Tuesday. "Ogie's announcement was supposed to come out [next month]. We didn't expect the news would break earlier."

The singer was referring to the decision of singer-composer and comedian Ogie Alcasid, apparently her boyfriend, to "say something about his life, about himself" in a tell-all in the forthcoming issue of a show biz magazine.

Everyone's been guessing it will be about separating from his wife of 11 years and taking up with Velasquez.

Alcasid previously told close media friends that he had "promised" the magazine "exclusivity," meaning, he couldn't talk to other publications about the rumored romance until the issue had come out.

Seen publicly

Not that the lovebirds made extra effort to hide the alleged relationship (only the announcement was closely guarded). They've been often seen together publicly. And when they appeared on television, they were invariably teased by cast-mates.

Sympathetic reports noted that Alcasid wasn't free to make any declarations until his high-profile marriage to Australian beauty queen-turned Philippine celebrity Michelle van Eimeren had been nullified.

It was in 2003 that Alcasid's romance with Velasquez was first hinted at in print. This was the year that Van Eimeren flew back to Australia with her and Alcasid's two children, Leila and Sarah.

Alcasid and Velasquez steadfastly denied the rumors.

Curiously enough, when Van Eimeren was interviewed by phone on a show biz talk program late last year, she said everything was fine between her and her husband. At that point, Alcasid would only say, "I love my family."

REGINE VELASQUEZ

The rumors persisted—specifically, that Alcasid had filed for annulment. He has denied that to this day, saying on a news program early this week that he had "not taken legal steps."

At Tuesday's press con, Velasquez said she was "happy with my life now, happy with the recent turn of events."

Indeed, career-wise there seems to be little for her to complain about. The press con launched her Star Cinema-Viva movie, "Paano Kita Iibigin." The day before, Velasquez had another press con for this year's finals of the GMA 7 talent search "Pinoy Pop Superstar," which she hosts.

She admitted the romance during the Monday press con—in tears—saying, in so many words that she loved Alcasid "very much" and that the reason they hadn't come out earlier was that they were "protecting a lot of people."

"Paano Kita Iibigin," where Velasquez stars with Piolo Pascual, opens in theaters on May 30. Incidentally, the theme song was composed by Alcasid.

Marinel R. Cruz

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GEORGINA DIAZ-BALLIETT, *Garment Exporter*
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Smoking may now be hazardous to US films

LOS ANGELES—US FILM PRODUCERS have been told that smoking may now be hazardous to their movies.

The film industry group that rates US movies in terms of suitability for children has issued new rules that would stop kids from seeing movies that glorified lighting up onscreen.

The Motion Picture Association of America said that in the past, illegal teen smoking has been just one factor in rating films, alongside other parental concerns such as sex, violence and adult language.

Exception

But now smoking itself will be considered as a factor and depictions that glamorize smoking, or movies that feature pervasive smoking, may receive ratings that do not allow children into theaters to see them.

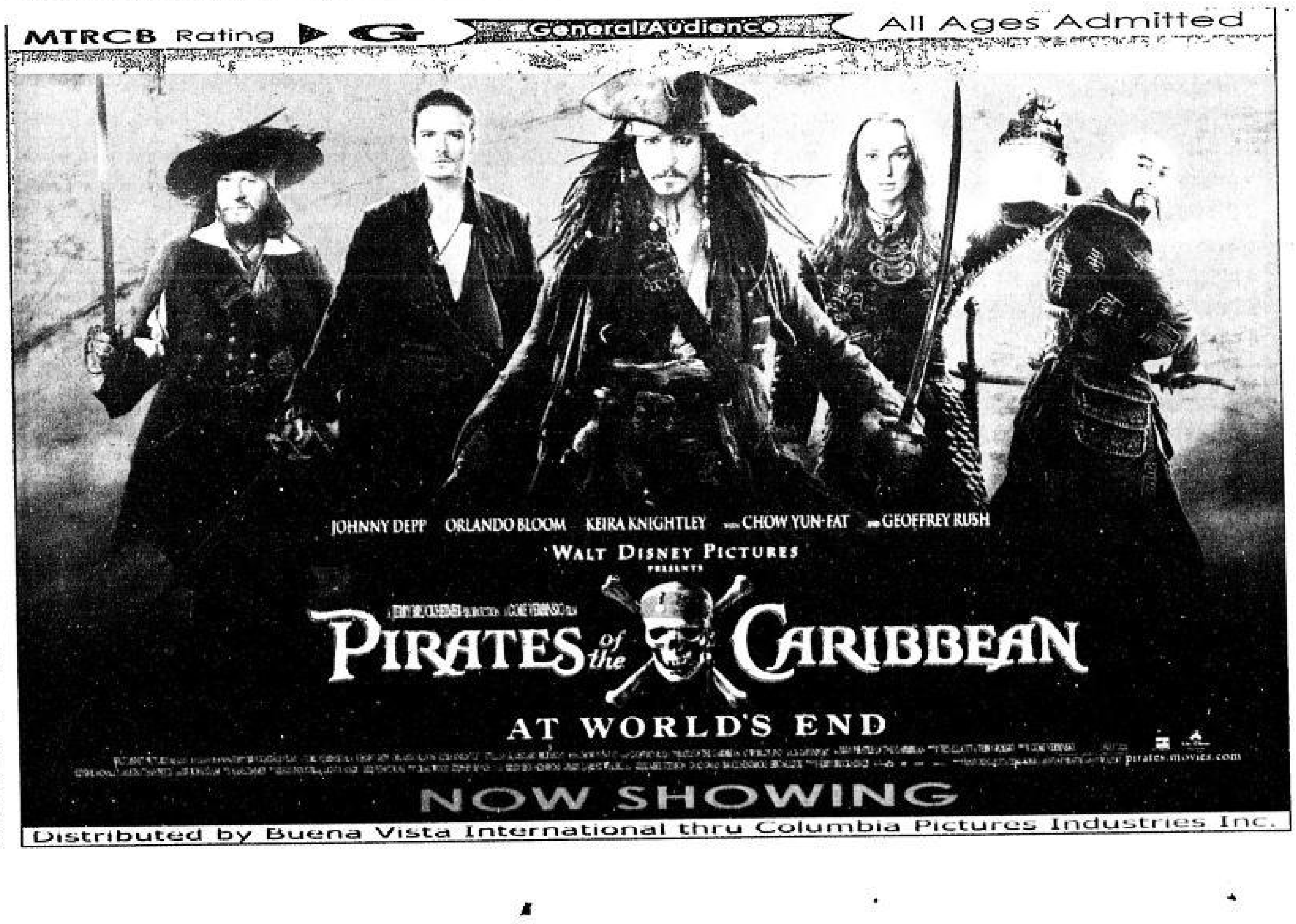
The only exception to that rule are films where the smoking is historically important, like "Good Night, and Good Luck," which depicted the life of chain-smoking journalist Edward R. Murrow. The film was rated PG, meaning that parents could take older children to see it.

Cheer Factor

The MPAA classifies movies suitable for all children as "G"; an "R" rating restricts audiences to people 17 years or older.

The industry group has long been under pressure from health groups to ban children from seeing characters light up in movies, a long-lived screen tradition, and the MPAA's decision fell short of that goal.

MPAA chair and CEO Dan Glickman said in a statement, "Clearly, smoking is increasingly an unacceptable behavior in our society ... No parent wants a child to take up the habit." *Reuters*



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DAN Futterman, Angelina Jolie, Mariane Pearl and Brad Pitt after a gala screening of "A Mighty Heart" in Cannes on Monday. REUTERS

CANNES NOTEBOOK

HERE ARE SOME SNIPPETS OF NEWS AND VIEWS FROM THE 60TH Cannes Film Festival.

Polanski peeved

Roman Polanski walked out of a news conference on Sunday, blaming roughly 200 reporters from around the globe for failing to ask questions that deeply probed the segments of "Chacun son Cinema (To Each His Own Cinema)."

In the movie, some 35 directors—most of whom were at the conference—offered short films about their love of cinema. Polanski, 73, director of such movies as "Rosemary's Baby" and the Oscar-winning "The Pianist," made one segment that dealt with sex in the cinema.

Near the end of the hour-long conference, Polanski said reporters failed to provide readers with in-depth analysis of film because they spent too much time behind their computers.

Moore does it again

Michael Moore lit up Cannes in 2004 when his controversial anti-Bush polemic "Fahrenheit 9/11" became the shock winner of the Palme d'Or top prize.

This year he has done it again with the out-of-competition "SiCKO," a documentary about the US health care system that had viewers laughing and crying before cheering at the end. The director is in hot water with the US authorities for making an unauthorized trip to Cuba as part of the film, but as far as Cannes is concerned, he can do no wrong.

U2 performs

Irish rockers U2 performed two songs on the stairs leading to the main festival cinema just after midnight on Saturday, and hundreds of passers-by waited to watch and cheer the free mini-concert. The band is in town for digital 3D movie "U2 3D." *Reuters*

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PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 11:50,3:10,6:30,9:50	SPIDER-MAN 3 G 12:50,3:50,6:50,9:50	PIRATES OF THE CARRIBEAN 3 G 1:30,4:50,8:10

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1:00. 4:20. 7:40
③ SHREK 3 (GP)
11:30, 1:30, 3:30
5:30. 7:30, 9:30
④ PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 (GP)
2:00. 5:20, 8:40

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10:00 GP

CINEMA 5 PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN
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10:45 GP

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June 15 , 2007	Champion of the World (Jed Madela)	8:30 PM

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Mon David, Cookie Chua lead stars of 4th Makati jazz fest

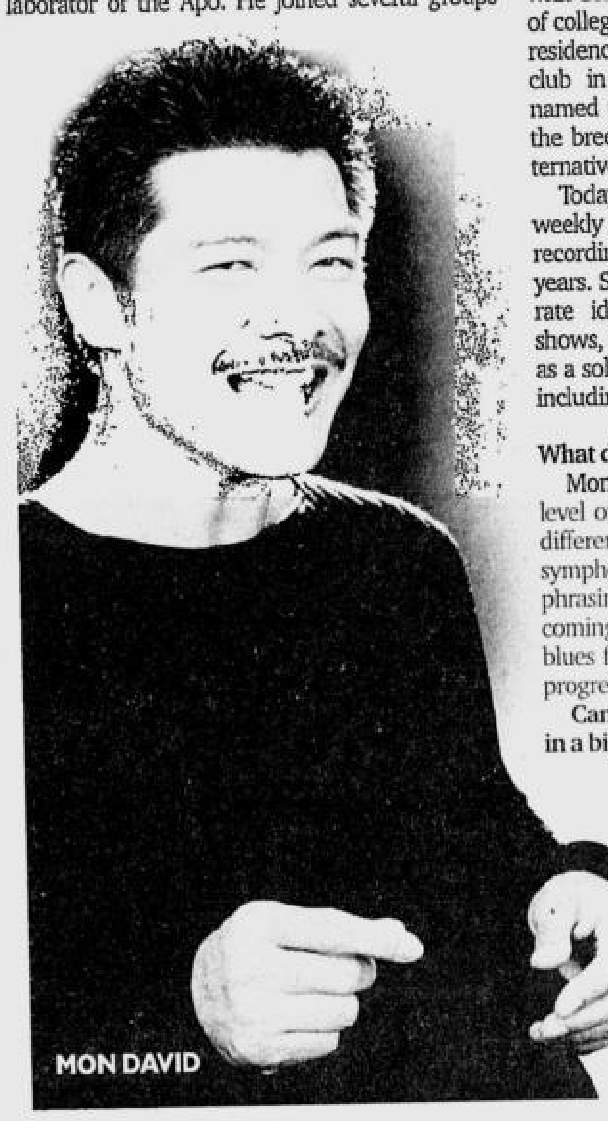
By Pocholo Concepcion
Contributor

TAKE FIVE

OF THE FIVE ACTS IN THE 4TH Makati Jazz and World Music Festival on Friday, 7 p.m., at the Plaza Strip in Power Plant Mall, Rockwell Center, Mon David and Cookie Chua have logged in the most hours playing before diverse audiences.

How well do people know them, especially their forays into an old yet misunderstood music form like jazz?

David, 53, spent much of the 1970s as a session musician, notably as drummer and musical collaborator of the Apo. He joined several groups that played regular sets at hotel clubs and lounges, even becoming part of a musical comedy revue that toured abroad—all of which helped him become a well-molded singer-composer whose forte just happens to be jazz.


MON DAVID

Last year, he won the Grand Prize at the London International Jazz Competition.

Chua, 35, was still in school in 1989 when she started singing with Color It Red, one of a number of college rock bands that took up residency at Red Rocks, a small club in Quezon City (later renamed Club Dredd) that became the breeding ground for local alternative acts.

COOKIE CHUA

Today, Color It Red still plays weekly gigs at various clubs, while recording albums every three years. She has established a separate identity, appearing on TV shows, concerts and other events as a solo artist who can sing just about anything, including jazz.

What do you like about jazz?

Mon: The freedom, the discipline, the very high level of musicality, the ability to create music in different formats like duo, trio, quartet, big band, symphonic setup, etc. … the spontaneity of it. The phrasing and styling. The element of surprise, coming up with something out of nothing … the blues feeling … inner pulse … interesting chord progressions … and a thousand other reasons!

Can you describe the experience of singing in a big jazz concert?

Mon: I was with Tots Tolentino, Colby de la Calzada and Joey Quirino, et al. at the North Sea Jazz Festival in the Netherlands in 1993. It wasn't so much our performance that mattered, but the joy of watching Bobby McFerrin, Herbie Hancock, Chick Corea, Chaka Khan and John McLaughlin, among others. It was something else, three nights of jazz in various forms!

Cookie: Even a small gig at '70s Bistro makes me nervous. *Grabe ang takot ko nung kumanta ako* with Jr Cobb, *kasi wala akong kilala sa* members *kundi si* Butch Saulog. But I was comforted by the thought that Butch knew my keys *at pwede niya akong alalayan. Bigla ba namang* last minute *di raw siya pwede at si* Elmir Saison *ang magpi*-piano! *Di ko sila kilala at mukhang masusungit pa. Pero sabi ni* Colby de la Calzada, *'Pababayaan ka ba namin?' Nag*-calm down *ako* eventually *at ang ganda ng kinalabasan ng* show.

How has the experience of singing jazz in music festivals, especially those open to the general public, helped your style and technique?

Mon: It has helped me expand my creativity in terms of building and rebuilding my repertoire, honing my capacity to connect with the audience in a deeper way … I've also become more flexible and relaxed.

Cookie: It has helped me gain more confidence. I used to hesitate when people invite me to such events.

What songs do you perform at such events?

Mon: Jazz standards … *kung saan ako* comfortable *at pwedeng maglaro at makipag*-interact with the other musicians. *Minsan* Filipino tunes, Kapampangan songs, Jobim favorites, Bill Evans compositions. *Minsan mga* original like "Let Go," "Don sa Brazil," "Bu'ang" …

Cookie: Usually *nai*-invite *lang ako* to sing for a certain band, so *'yung* choice of songs *sila nagde*-decide, or they ask *kung ano yung mga kantang* comfortable *ako*. It's my fourth year to participate in the Makati jazz fest. We really prepare for this. Every year we learn new songs and rehearse for the event. *Di kumpleto ang grupo* (Bluesviminda) *ngayon. Pero nariyan pa rin sina* Butch Saulog *at* Simon Tan.

The 4th Makati Jazz and World Music Festival is part of the celebrations marking the 337th anniversary of the city's founding. Also performing are Guarana, Juan Pablo Dream and Brigada. The public is invited.

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1	SHREK 3	1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:30, 10:50	G
2	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3	12:40, 4:10, 7:50, 11:30	G
3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3	12:00, 3:30, 7:10, 10:50	G
4	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3	2:50, 6:30, 10:10	G

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	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
G1 GLORIETTA 1	SHREK 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	SPIDER-MAN 3	SPIDER-MAN 3			
G4 GLORIETTA 4	SHREK 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	SINEMARS (10:30 am - 12:00 nn) / LUCKY YOU	SHREK 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END
GB1 GREENBELT 1	SHREK 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END					
GB3 GREENBELT 3	THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	SHREK 3 GUARANTEED SEATS	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS		
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	THX PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END GUARANTEED SEATS	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	SHREK 3	SHREK 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END		
ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU	SPIDER-MAN 3	WHISPER	SHREK 3	GRAY MATTERS			
M2 MARKET! MARKET!	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	SHREK 3	SPIDER-MAN 3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END		

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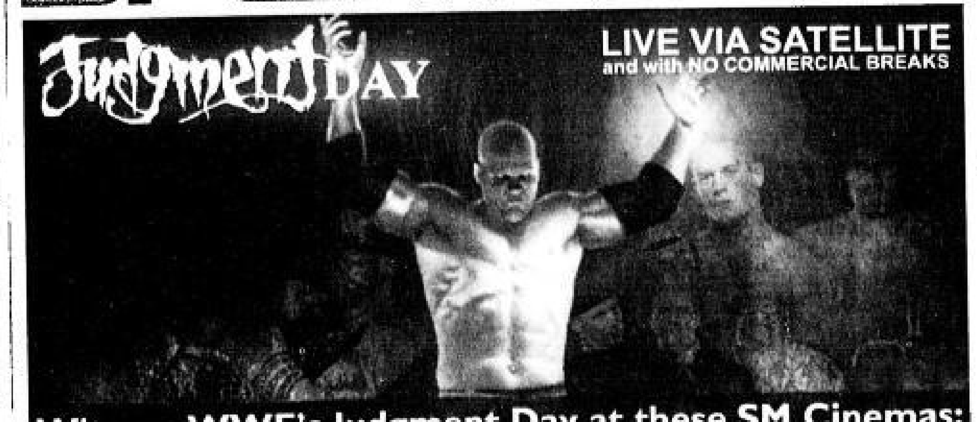

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2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SPIDER-MAN 3/ WHISPER
6 SHREK 3/ FRACTURE
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SPIDER-MAN 3
CENTERSTAGE
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1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
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3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
6 SHREK 3
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
9 SHREK 3
10 SPIDER-MAN 3
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3
5 FRACTURE
6 SHREK 3
7 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
8 WHISPER
9 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
10 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
11 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
12 SHREK 3

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 935-0749
1 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
2 28 WEEKS LATER
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 SHREK 3
9 SPIDER-MAN 3
10 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
11 WHISPER
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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1 SPIDER-MAN 3
2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SHREK 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 28 WEEKS LATER
7 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
8 FRACTURE
9 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
10 WHISPER

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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 SHREK 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 SHREK 3

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2 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
8 SHREK 3
9 WHISPER

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2 SHREK 3
3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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2 SPIDER-MAN 3
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8 MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN
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10 SHREK 3
11 28 WEEKS LATER
12 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3

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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
4 SHREK 3

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5 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3
7 28 WEEKS LATER
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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4 SHREK 3

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5 SHREK 3
6 SPIDER-MAN 3

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2 SHREK 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
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3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 SPIDER-MAN 3

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1 SHREK 3
2 SPIDER-MAN 3
3 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3
4 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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2 SUNSHINE
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4 SPIDER-MAN 3
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3 SPIDER-MAN 3
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8 SPIDER-MAN 3

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7 SPIDER-MAN 3
8 PIRATES OF CARIBBEAN 3

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Star power loses its political clout

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

LAST MAY 14, FOUR ENTERTAINMENT luminaries—**Tito Sotto, Cesar Montano, Richard Gomez** and **Victor Wood**—ran for the Philippine Senate. As of this writing (May 17), none of them has come anywhere near the winners' circle of 12. Despite their stellar appeal and strong name and face recall, their quest for a Senate seat might end up as a frustratingly quixotic dream.

What has gone wrong? In past polls, stars like **Ramon Revilla, Lito Lapid, Bong Revilla** and **Jinggoy Estrada** were able to parlay their show biz popularity into Senate seats. Why haven't Cesar, Tito, Richard and Victor been able to duplicate that feat?

Negative factors

In Cesar's case, the problem may have been his relatively late entry in the Senate race. It takes time even for a star to let the public know that he's running for national office.

Cesar's choice of banner issues—education, tourism, the arts—could be another negative factor. Many other senatorial bets pushed for educational reforms, so Cesar didn't stand out on this regard. As for the arts, they are indeed an important clarion call, but he didn't detail how he wanted to enhance their significance in the national life, so the issue didn't engage voters' interest.

Richard Gomez's liability could have been his anti-drugs stance—not that it wasn't important, but it didn't excite or convince viewer-voters, because his track record as an anti-drugs advocate and fighter wasn't all that clear.

He also didn't project strongly and articulately in political fora on television, and his relatively terse and cocky manner may have turned some people off.

Lack of momentum

In Victor Wood's case, the decline in his show biz activities and his lack of strong party machinery made it difficult for him to come across as a dynamic and viable senatorial candidate.

As for Tito Sotto, he ran as an independent, so despite his popularity, he couldn't bank on party machinery to generate added momentum for his campaign.

This was unfortunate, since he had the senatorial experience that the other lacked, and he could have come up with a number of bills that would have benefited the populace in general, and the arts, entertainment and media sectors in particular.

Compare these bets' showing with their more successful predecessors, and you can get more insights into their current difficulties, and how they could have been minimized.

Both Ramon and Lito came from stellar careers that lasted for decades, and Lito had already scored as governor of Pampanga. Bong was a popular young action star, while Jinggoy benefited from his strong Erap connection.

Times have changed

It could also be, however, that the times have really changed, some voters have wised up, and stellar appeal no longer spells electoral success as much as it used to. Even celebrities running for local posts have been having a rough time, with only **Vilma Santos** (Rosa Recto), winning big, as governor of Batangas.

In the light of this new reality, stars who want to run for public office in the future should make sure that they have more than their popularity going for them.

In Vilma's case, she cut her political teeth as mayor of Lipa City for years before she "dared" to run for governor. We trust that other celebrities with dreams of political success dancing in their heads will similarly do their homework—and groundwork.

Fans' Day

The Cueshe band holds its Fans' Day on May 25 at SM North Edsa's Entertainment Plaza. Just bring a Cueshe CD to gain entry for a fun afternoon of games, songs and surprises.

Palmolive's Circle of 10

The first batch of hopefuls in Palmolive's Shining Circle of 10 were recently presented on "Asap 07." **Kharu Jazmin, Stephanie S.** and **Jerica Reyes** wowed judges **Audie Gemora, Jamie Rivera** and **Bianca Valerio** with their talent and charm.

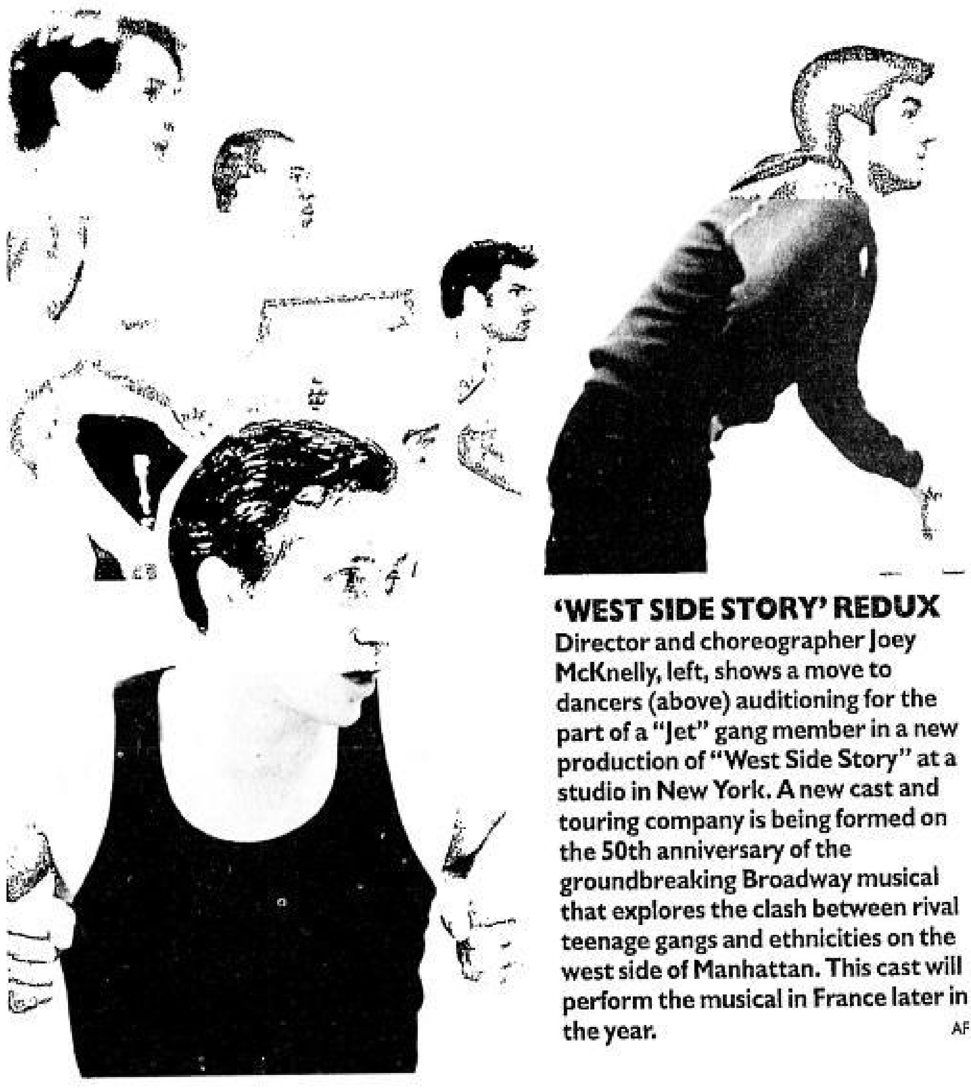
KID FIT

Sam hosts Kid's Choice preview party

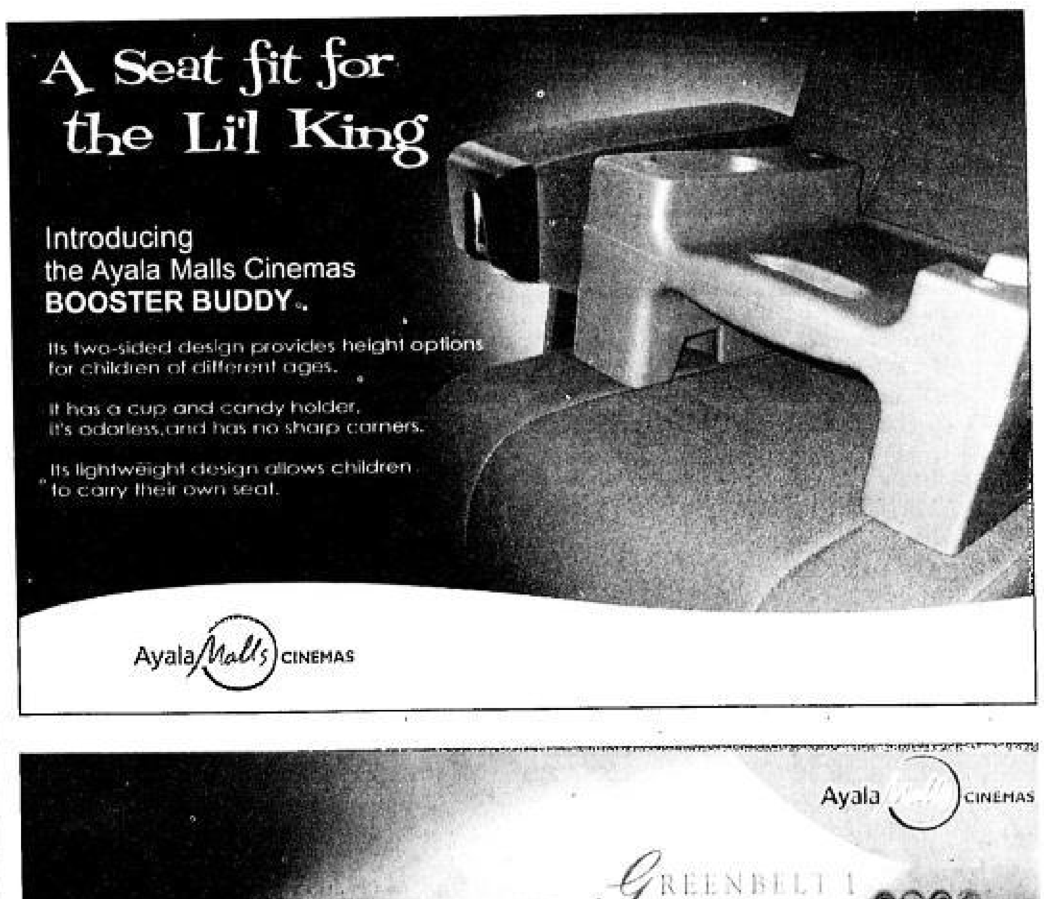
SAM CONCEPCION is hosting this year's Nickelodeon's Kids' Choice Awards 20th anniversary.

He invites all children to celebrate with him "everything outrageous and gooey" in a preview party on Saturday at the Aliw Theater, CCP Complex, Pasay City.

Sam was one of the special guests in last year's circus-centric celebration, when he won the most sought-after blimp as 2006 Nickelodeon Pinoy Wannabe Awardee. This year marks two decades of slime and celebration.



'WEST SIDE STORY' REDUX Director and choreographer Joey McKnelly, left, shows a move to dancers (above) auditioning for the part of a "Jet" gang member in a new production of "West Side Story" at a studio in New York. A new cast and touring company is being formed on the 50th anniversary of the groundbreaking Broadway musical that explores the clash between rival teenage gangs and ethnicities on the west side of Manhattan. This cast will perform the musical in France later in the year. AFP



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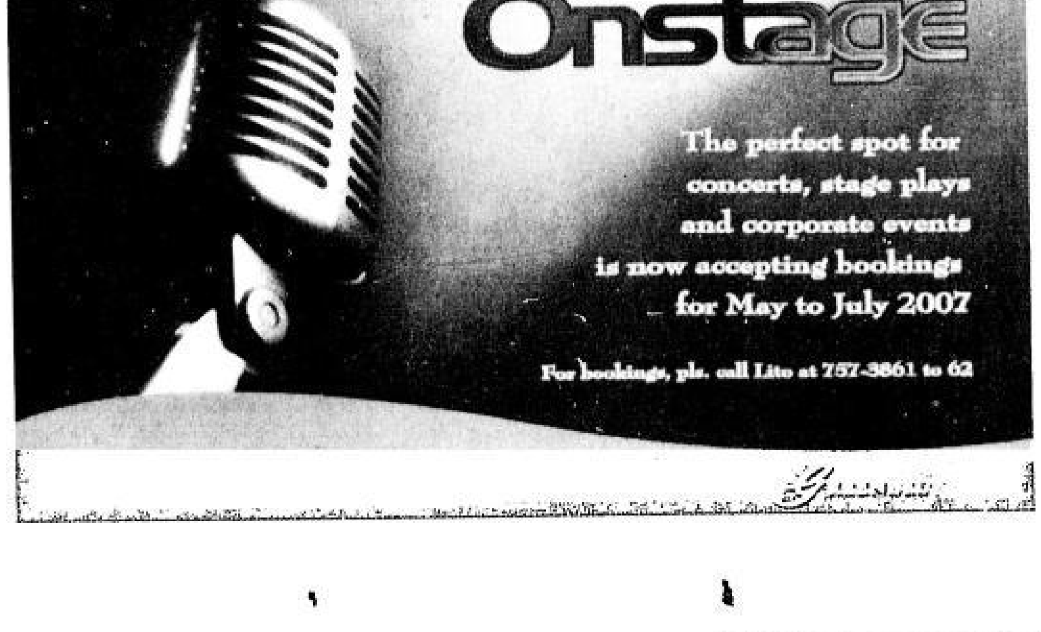

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Zsazsa: 'I can never…

From page D1

follow.

"I can never find another man like Dolphy," she said, while admitting that their partnership is no bed of roses.

"We have our share of issues and [emotional] baggage," she said.

It was earlier reported that Dolphy's extended family is often the cause of strain in their relationship. Two of Dolphy's grandsons have recently figured in murder cases.

"I wish there could be just the two of us," Zsazsa said. "But he has a big family."

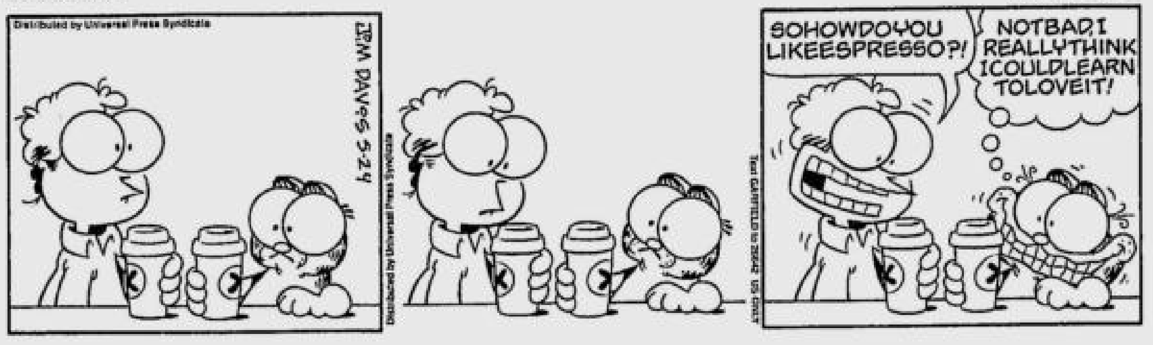
She described Dolphy as "very patient."

In an earlier interview, Dolphy returned the compliment, saying: "*Kumbaga sa* basketball, we're a good team."

And the main reason she holds on, according to Zsazsa: "He's my family. Families don't abandon one another."

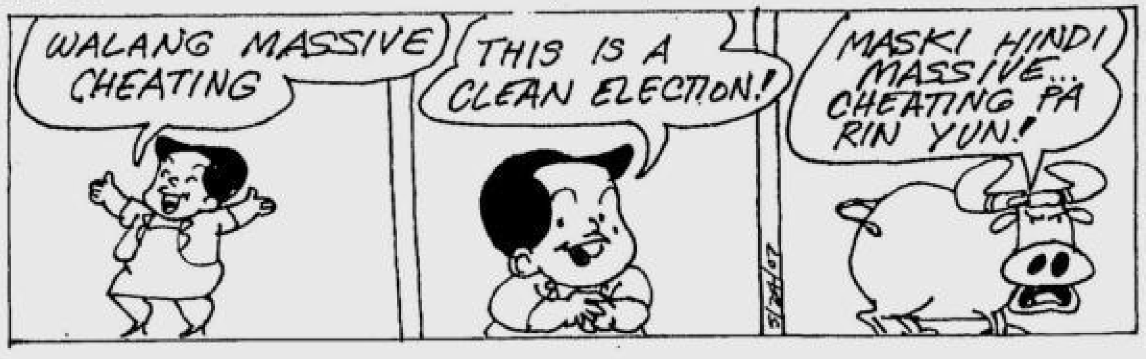
GARFIELD

BY JIM DAVIS


SOHOWDOYOU LIKEESPRESSO?!
NOTBAD,I REALLYTHINK ICOULDLEARN TOLOVEIT!
JIM DAVIS 5-24

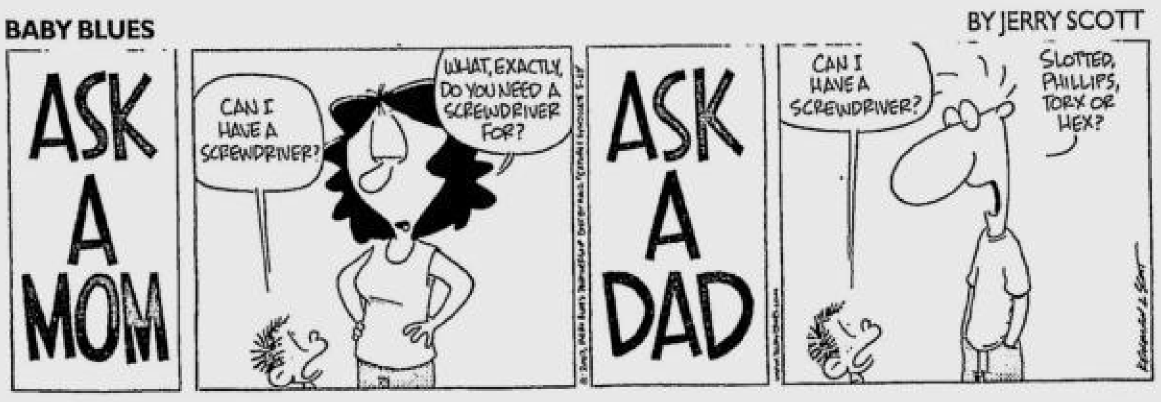
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


WALANG MASSIVE CHEATING
THIS IS A CLEAN ELECTION!
MASKI HINDI MASSIVE... CHEATING PA RIN YUN!

BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT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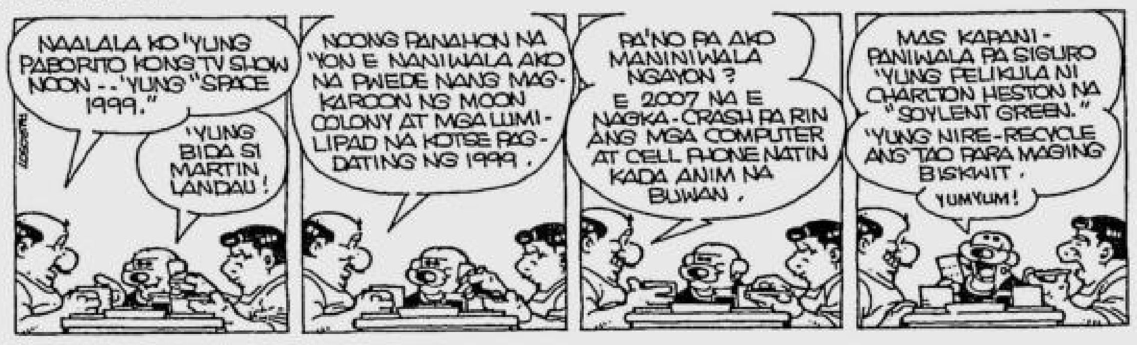
CAN I HAVE A SCREWDRIVER?
WHAT, EXACTLY, DO YOU NEED A SCREWDRIVER FOR?
ASK A DAD
CAN I HAVE A SCREWDRIVER?
SLOTTED, PHILLIPS, TORX OR HEX?

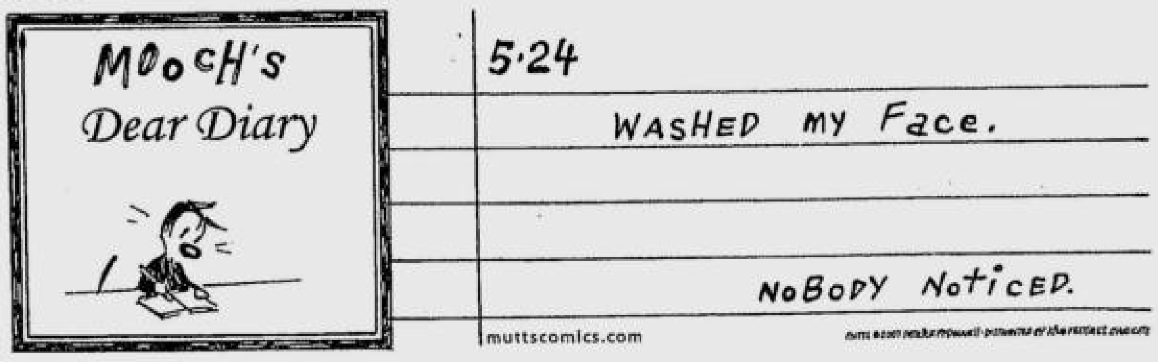
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


NAALALA KO 'YUNG PABORITO KONG TV SHOW NOON -- 'YUNG "SPACE 1999."
'YUNG BIDA SI MARTIN LANDAU!
NOONG PANAHON NA 'YON E NANIWALA AKO NA PWEDE NANG MAG-KAROON NG MOON COLONY AT MGA LUMI-LIPAD NA KOTSE PAG-DATING NG 1999.
PA'NO PA AKO MANINIWALA NGAYON? E 2007 NA E NAGKA-CRASH PA RIN ANG MGA COMPUTER AT CELL PHONE NATIN KADA ANIM NA BUWAN.
MAS KAPANI-PANIWALA PA SIGURO 'YUNG PELIKULA NI CHARLTON HESTON NA "SOYLENT GREEN." 'YUNG NIRE-RECYCLE ANG TAO PARA MAGING BISKWIT.
YUMYUM!

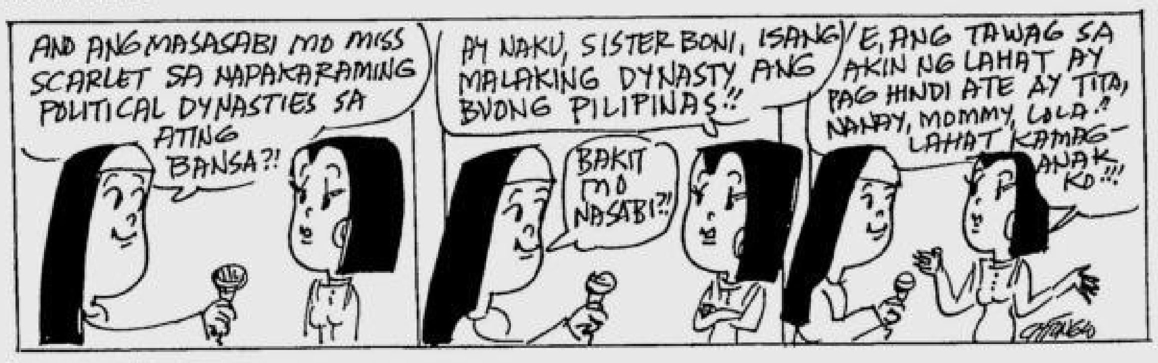
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH'S Dear Diary
5·24
WASHED MY Face.
NoBODY NoticED.
muttscomics.com

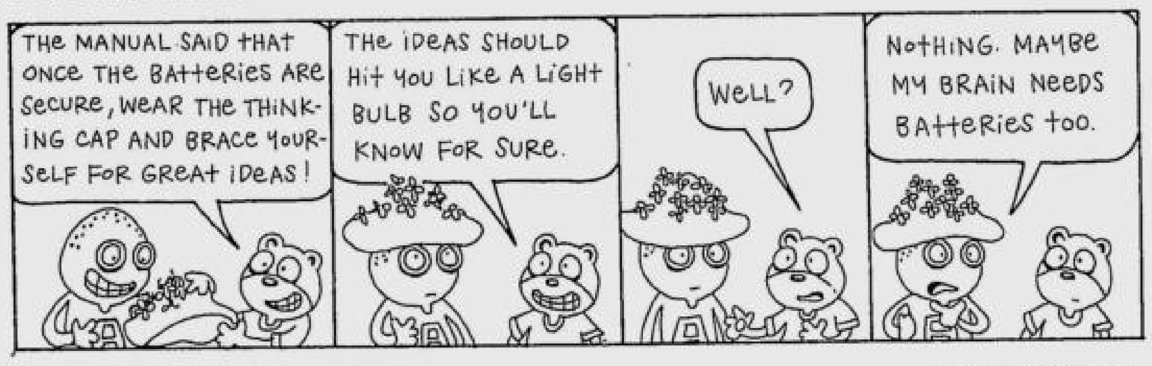
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


AND ANG MASASABI MO MISS SCARLET SA NAPAKARAMING POLITICAL DYNASTIES SA ATING BANSA?!
AY NAKU, SISTER BONI, ISANG MALAKING DYNASTY ANG BUONG PILIPINAS!!
BAKIT MO NASABI?!
E, ANG TAWAG SA AKIN NG LAHAT AY PAG HINDI ATE AY TITA, NANAY, MOMMY, LOLA! LAHAT KAMAG-ANAK KO!!!

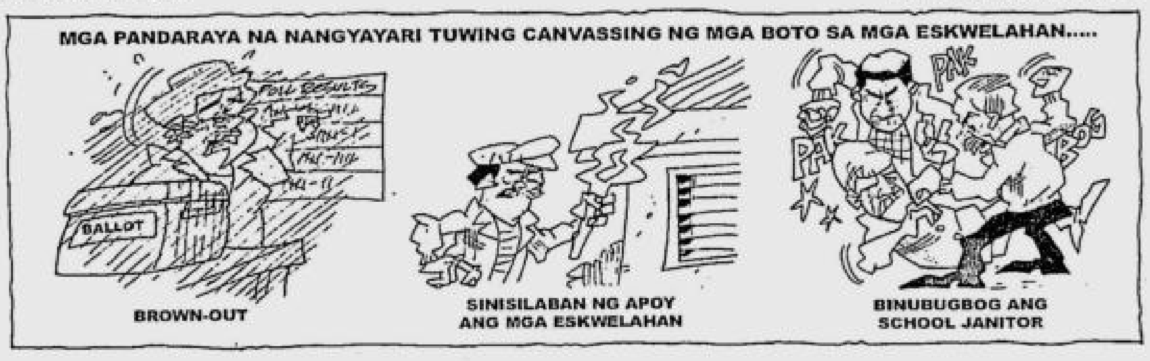
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


THE MANUAL SAID THAT ONCE THE BATTERIES ARE SECURE, WEAR THE THINKING CAP AND BRACE YOURSELF FOR GREAT IDEAS!
THE IDEAS SHOULD HIT YOU LIKE A LIGHT BULB SO YOU'LL KNOW FOR SURE.
WELL?
NOTHING. MAYBE MY BRAIN NEEDS BATTERIES TOO.

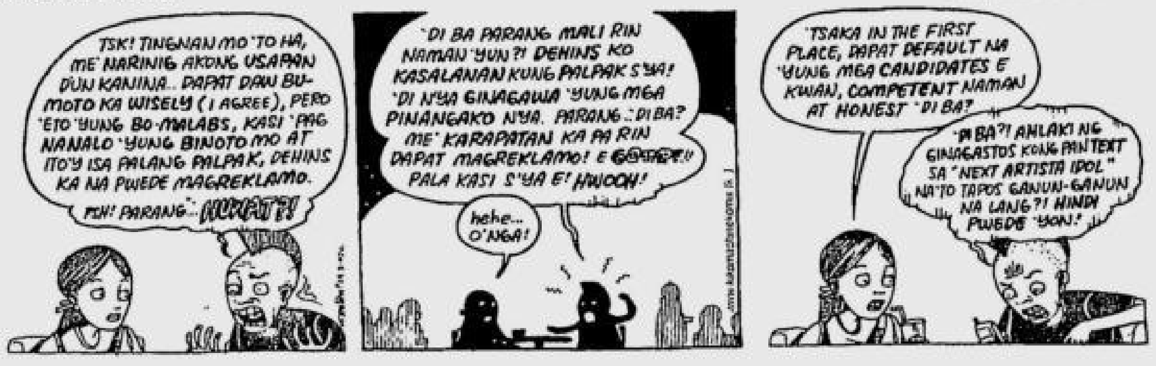
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


MGA PANDARAYA NA NANGYAYARI TUWING CANVASSING NG MGA BOTO SA MGA ESKWELAHAN.....
BALLOT
BROWN-OUT
SINISILABAN NG APOY ANG MGA ESKWELAHAN
BINUBUGBOG ANG SCHOOL JANITOR

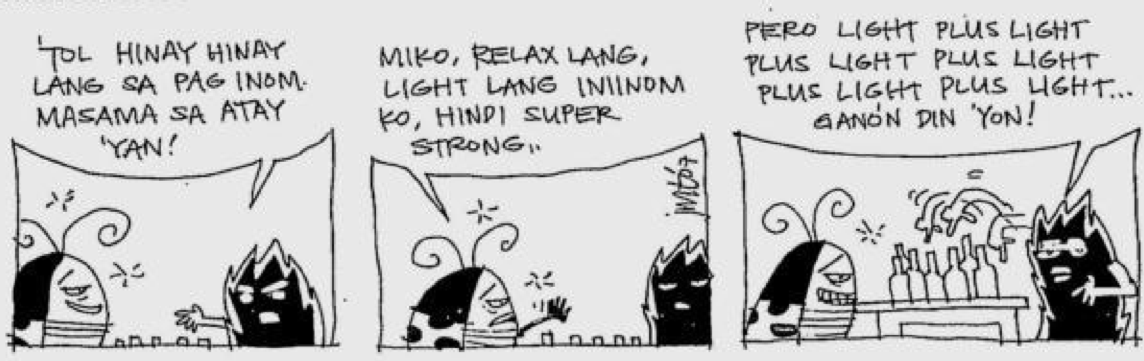
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


TSK! TINGNAN MO 'TO HA, ME' NARINIG AKONG USAPAN DUN KANINA.. DAPAT DAW BUMOTO KA WISELY (I AGREE), PERO 'ETO 'YUNG BO-MALABS, KASI 'PAG NANALO 'YUNG BINOTO MO AT ITO'Y ISA PALANG PALPAK, DEHINS KA NA PWEDE MAGREKLAMO.
PSH! PARANG...
'DI BA PARANG MALI RIN NAMAN 'YUN?! DEHINS KO KASALANAN KUNG PALPAK S'YA! 'DI N'YA GINAGAWA 'YUNG MGA PINANGAKO NYA. PARANG...DI BA? ME' KARAPATAN KA PA RIN DAPAT MAGREKLAMO! E PALA KASI S'YA E! HWOOH!
hehe... O'NGA!
'TSAKA IN THE FIRST PLACE, DAPAT DEFAULT NA 'YUNG MGA CANDIDATES E KWAN, COMPETENT NAMAN AT HONEST 'DI BA?
'DI BA?! ANLAKI NG GINAGASTOS KONG PANTEXT SA "NEXT ARTISTA IDOL" NA'TO TAPOS GANUN-GANUN NA LANG?! HINDI PWEDE 'YON!

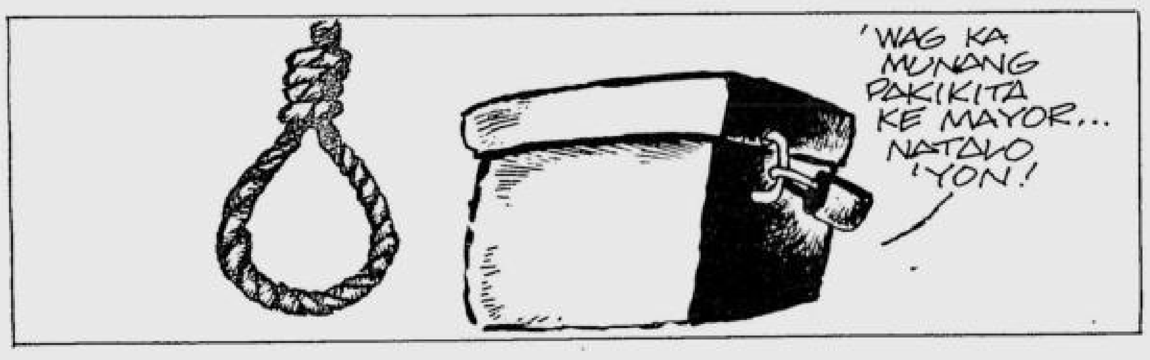
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


'TOL HINAY HINAY LANG SA PAG INOM. MASAMA SA ATAY 'YAN!
MIKO, RELAX LANG, LIGHT LANG INIINOM KO, HINDI SUPER STRONG.
PERO LIGHT PLUS LIGHT PLUS LIGHT PLUS LIGHT PLUS LIGHT PLUS LIGHT... GANON DIN 'YON!

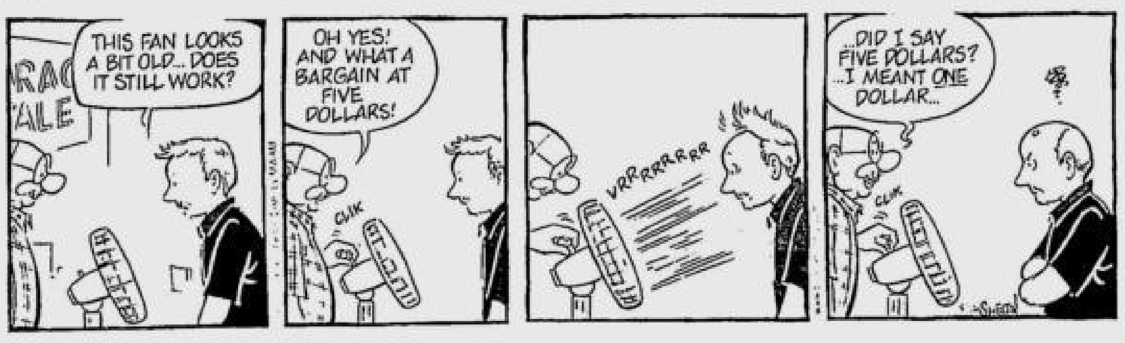
TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING

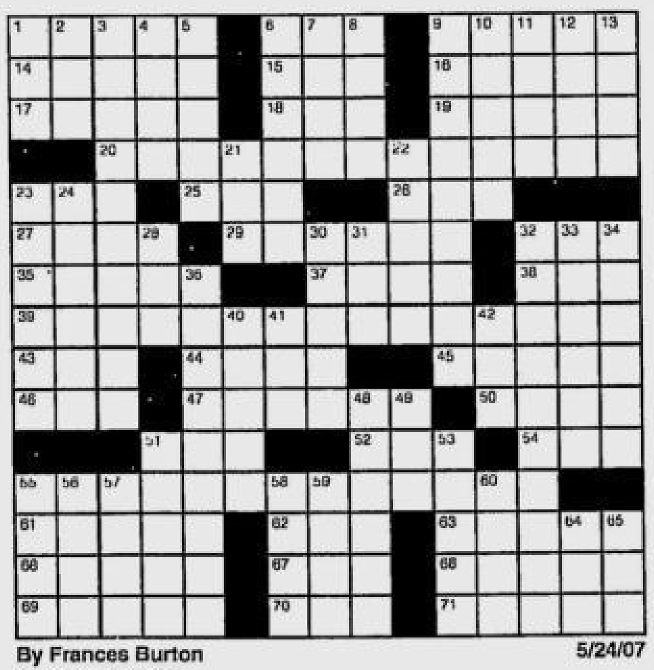

'WAG KA MUNANG PAKIKITA KE MAYOR... NATALO 'YON!

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


THIS FAN LOOKS A BIT OLD... DOES IT STILL WORK?
OH YES! AND WHAT A BARGAIN AT FIVE DOLLARS!
CLIK
VRRRRRRRR
...DID I SAY FIVE DOLLARS? ...I MEANT ONE DOLLAR...
CLIK

DAILY CROSSWORD



By Frances Burton
Summerville, GA

5/24/07

ACROSS

1 Vogue rival, briefly
6 Use indigo
9 Cranky character
14 "Entertaining Mr. Sloane" playwright
15 Conger
16 Unworldly
17 Euphemistic oath
18 Gobbled up
19 Lock of hair
20 Start of a quip
23 Copy
25 Little tyke
26 Dog's first name
27 Medal metal
29 Biblical doubter
32 Table tyrant
35 Thai or Malaysian
37 Stringed instrument
38 Historical period
39 Part 2 of quip
43 "For __ a jolly good..."
44 Boffo review
45 Ship's lowest deck
46 Museum display
47 Lifting devices
50 Function
51 Man with a title
52 USSR jet
54 Mack or Williams
55 End of quip
61 Buzzy places
62 Torrid
63 Horn sounds
66 French farewell
67 Pres. Lincoln
68 Insect stage
69 Fuses metal
70 Angler's requirement
71 Upright

DOWN

1 $-due mail
2 Bruins' great
3 Superlatively majestic
4 Fluttery flyer
5 Beginning
6 Lack
7 Abominable snowman
8 Hgt.
9 Become informed about
10 Broadcasted again
11 Deuterium discoverer
12 Fine spray
13 Baja buck
21 Caste mark
22 Muse of lyric poetry
23 First name in mysteries
24 More deluxe
28 Smidge
30 Mary Kate or Ashley
31 Tight-mouthed
32 Hi!
33 Baltimore player
34 Panted
36 Daffodil
40 Wait around
41 One of the Gabors
42 Slip up
48 Overacted
49 Drink slowly
51 Risk a ticket
53 Clark of "The Misfits"
55 Annual melt
56 Conceal
57 Heinous
58 Singe
59 Knight of the road
60 Eye drop
64 Letters for pipes
65 Had a session

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

C	L	A	S	S		E	R	S	T		C	A	R	A
A	U	R	A	S		L	U	T	E		I	N	O	N
D	R	I	V	E	R	E	D	U	C	A	T	I	O	N
S	E	L	A		O	V	I	D		G	A	M	M	A
			N	O	M	E			T	O	D	A	Y	S
S	I	G	N	L	A	N	G	U	A	G	E			
I	L	I	A	D			I	R	K		L	E	E	R
A	S	S		E	N	I	S	L	E	D		B	R	A
M	A	T	S		C	A	M			E	E	R	I	E
			P	I	A	N	O	L	E	S	S	O	N	S
A	T	H	E	N	A			A	L	I	T			
C	R	E	E	K		S	A	U	L		O	D	I	E
H	A	N	D	S	O	N	T	R	A	I	N	I	N	G
E	C	R	U		R	A	R	E		R	I	A	T	A
S	K	I	P		O	P	A	L		S	A	L	O	N

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5/24/07

HOROSCOPE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have a strong social conscience and are often involved in current issues. You certainly have opinions! You have a quick mind and a dry wit. Because you're very wrapped up in your causes, you're ready to tell the world what you think. You often fight for the underdog. The year ahead focuses on partnerships and close friendships. **Birthdate of:** Ray Stevenson, actor; Bob Dylan, singer; Kristin Scott Thomas, actress.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You might buy something very high-tech (like a computer) or something very modern for your home or a family member today. You're interested in beautiful, cutting-edge things today.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Expect to meet someone new and interesting today. This person will come from a different background or culture than yours. Plus, this person is a real character!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You're full of so many ideas that your mind is racing in many directions at once. It's exciting! It feels like electricity in the air! You can sense that something is going to happen.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Research can reveal surprising solutions today. You have a fresh way of looking at things now. (And you always find something in the last place you look.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Even if you spend today alone, pleasant surprises will catch you off-guard. You might come up with surprise solutions for an old problem.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Someone you already know could do something quite bizarre that shocks you today. Alternatively, you might meet a new person today who is a real character!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Your boss or possibly a parent could surprise you today. You might also develop a sudden crush on someone who is older or more established than you. It's an interesting day!

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Unexpected opportunities to travel or perhaps to take a course or expand your education definitely exist today. But your window of opportunity will be brief— act quickly!

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Surprise gifts, goodies, favors or boons could come your way today. For some reason, the universe owes you a favor. Keep your hands and pockets open. If something falls in your lap, be quick to receive it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): A casual relationship might heat up today in a committed way. Or perhaps a partner or close friend says or does something you least expect (hopefully something pleasant).

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): New equipment, new co-workers or something unexpected will interrupt your day at work. There might also be computer crashes and power outages.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Love at first sight can happen for some of you today. Surprises connected with sports, vacations and children are also possible. Be spontaneous about social activities. Accept last-minute invitations.

CONCEPTIS SU DOKU

Conceptis Sudoku by Dave Green

1		4	8					6
		9	7					
			9				7	2
						4	6	9
				3				
7	8	5						
9	2				1			
					8	6		
8					5	1		3

Difficulty Level ★★★

5/24

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HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.
Tips and program at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

1	9	7	8	6	3	5	2	4
8	4	2	5	1	9	3	6	7
3	5	6	7	2	4	9	8	1
5	2	8	3	7	1	4	9	6
9	3	4	2	5	6	1	7	8
6	7	1	4	9	8	2	5	3
4	6	9	1	8	5	7	3	2
7	1	5	6	3	2	8	4	9
2	8	3	9	4	7	6	1	5

Difficulty Level ★★★

Sick and tired of Ruffa story

FEEDBACK

From Toni-Jean Mallari (maldita_1777@yahoo.com), Via J. Aspetti 8, Venezia, Italy:

I may sound really rude saying this, but how sincere is Ruffa Gutierrez in this issue about the problem in her marriage? Maybe gimmick *na naman 'yan*. I am sick and tired seeing and reading about it. She wants dignity? And she also mentioned *na [ayaw niyang] lagi syang pinag-uusapan ng mga* press people? *E bakit kailangan ihayag niya 'yun* on-air *sa lahat kung totoong ayaw niya? Nagpapansin lang yan ... magsasabi siya na ayaw na niya, tapos ngayon kung anu-anong* second thoughts *na naman nasa isipan nya.*

For the kids? *Dapat nag-isip muna siya bago niya nilantad 'yang tungkol sa kanilang mag-asawa, kasi paglaki ng mga bata, malalaman din nila 'yan.*

Ruffa, why did you start this mess, *tapos parang* you will end up back with him?

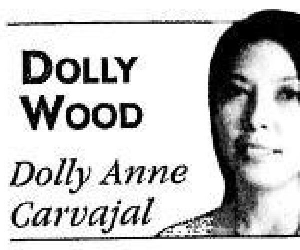
***

From: Ray Carbungco (reycarb@aol.com) 3350 Kingston Way, San Diego, Ca. 92161:

I think Ruffa Gutierrez just wants to make some noise because she wants to come back full time to show biz. What does she mean that she wants to go somewhere to get out of the controversies? Doesn't she realize that she started this confusion about her and her supposed husband Ylmaz Bektas?

She could have just shut her mouth and slipped back quietly into the biz. Over-acting *na siya*.

Latest news on Nora Aunor no longer shocking



DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Anne Carvajal

SINCE NORA AUNOR AND MY MOM go a long way back, I've been privy to many of the actress' colorful escapades. That's why I wasn't a bit shocked when news broke out that she married her female manager **Norie Sayo** in Clark County Las Vegas last May 22, 2000 (marriage certificate # D1906650, according to the Clark County, Nevada website).

RICHARD Merck

I asked **Lotlot de Leon** about it, but she was clueless. I texted **Richard Merk** (who also married Ate Guy in Vegas in 1988) for more info, but he would rather not comment. Nora and Norie have been through hell and high water together. Perhaps they just wanted to affirm what they meant to each other—so they tied the knot ... or did they not? It just makes me wonder how Nora's longtime companion **John Rendez** fits into this picture. Three's company? Menage a trois?

Birthday boy

Dennis Trillo held his birthday bash at his bar, Barracks (on T. Morato). **Alfred Vargas, Katrina Halili, Jaya, Allan K** and **Diana Zubiri** co-own the place.

We found it cute watching **Angel Locsin** dote on Dennis all night. Their "Darna" and "Majika" bond remains intact. I teased Dennis: "Angel is loveless now. So are you. Isn't it the perfect time to rekindle your thwarted romance?" He blushed and said, "*Bahala na*. Time will tell."

Even his family approves of the match "*Sayang nga, naudlot sila dati*," Dennis' cool mom Rita sighed. She said that Dennis is such an ideal son, "*Sana 'wag siyang mapikot sa sobrang kabaitan niya.*"

This Dennis is no menace.

My winner

Got this meaningful text from one of my favorite people in and out of the biz, **Cesar Montano**: ""When we look back and wonder how we ever made it through, we realize it's not because we've been clever but because God has been wise, not because we've been strong but because God has been mighty; not because we've been consistent but because God has been faithful."

CESAR Montano

Buboy must be in an introspective mood after the grueling elections. Even if he didn't make it to the magic 12, in my book he will always be a winner!

Readers' corner

I received this email from emmssanjuan@yahoo.com: "I read somewhere that Yilmaz Bektas' family was once involved in drug smuggling. Is this true? Could that be the deeper reason why Ruffa left him? Check out this link http:// www.habervitrini.com/haber.asp?id=80153."

I checked out the site. The report was in Turkish—"'Uyupturucu Kacakisinn Odlu Flypynler Unlu Aktrstyyle Evlendy." Being a Linguistics major, the phrase intrigued me, so I did some research. The phrase translated to: Drug Smuggler's son gets married to famous Philippine actress.

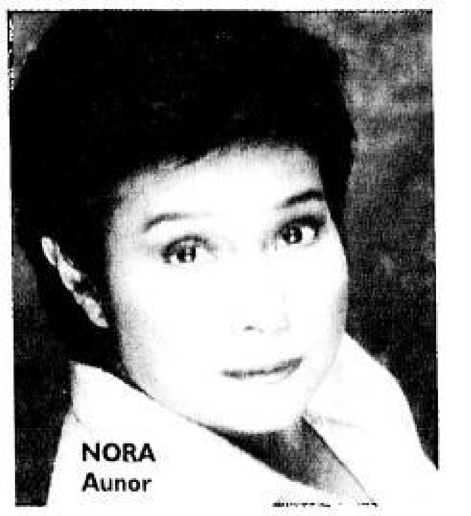
I remember that Yilmaz has clarified the issue earlier. He ought to speak up again now to clear his name. An e-mail to one TV show just won't suffice. We've heard Ruffa's side of the story. It's Yilmaz's turn. This column is open to his camp.

Happy Toni

I have fond memories of my brief stint working with **Toni Gonzaga** on the defunct "E.T.K." Enervon Multivitamins could not have found a better endorser. She laughed, "That will drive me nuts!"

Belo Beauty 101

Beauty expert Dr. **Vicki Belo** hosts "Belo Beauty 101," a 30-minute telemagazine program on TFC North America every Sunday at 10:30 p.m. A celebrity endorser joins her as guest co-host for every episode. Find out the stars' beauty secrets and catch reality VTRs of celebrities undergoing treatment. *Belosisima*!



NORA Aunor

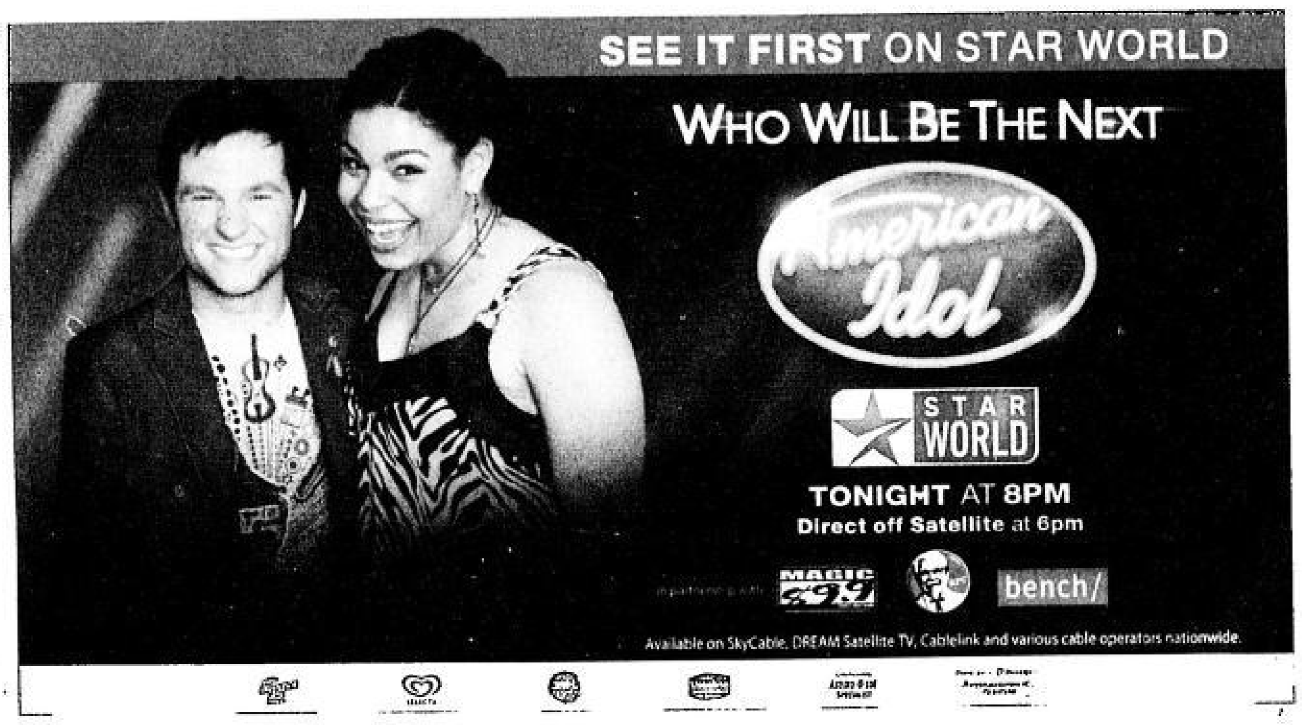
New album

Among all the Bossa Nova CDs I've listened to, I like Sabrina's debut album (Vicor Music) the best. Her soothing voice makes you feel like you're grooving in the Caribbean. It includes "Pretty World," "I Say A Lil' Prayer," "Nightbird," "Fixing a Broken Heart" and other cool tunes.

Band reunion

Catch the much-awaited reunion of Parliament Syndicate band at Bagaberde Pasig tonight. Great musicians, unite!

For feedback, e-mail wateringholeshangrila@yahoo.com.



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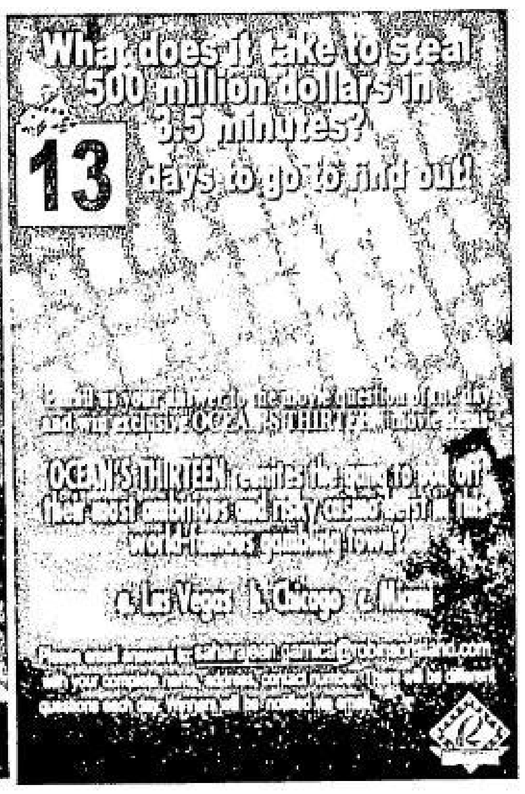
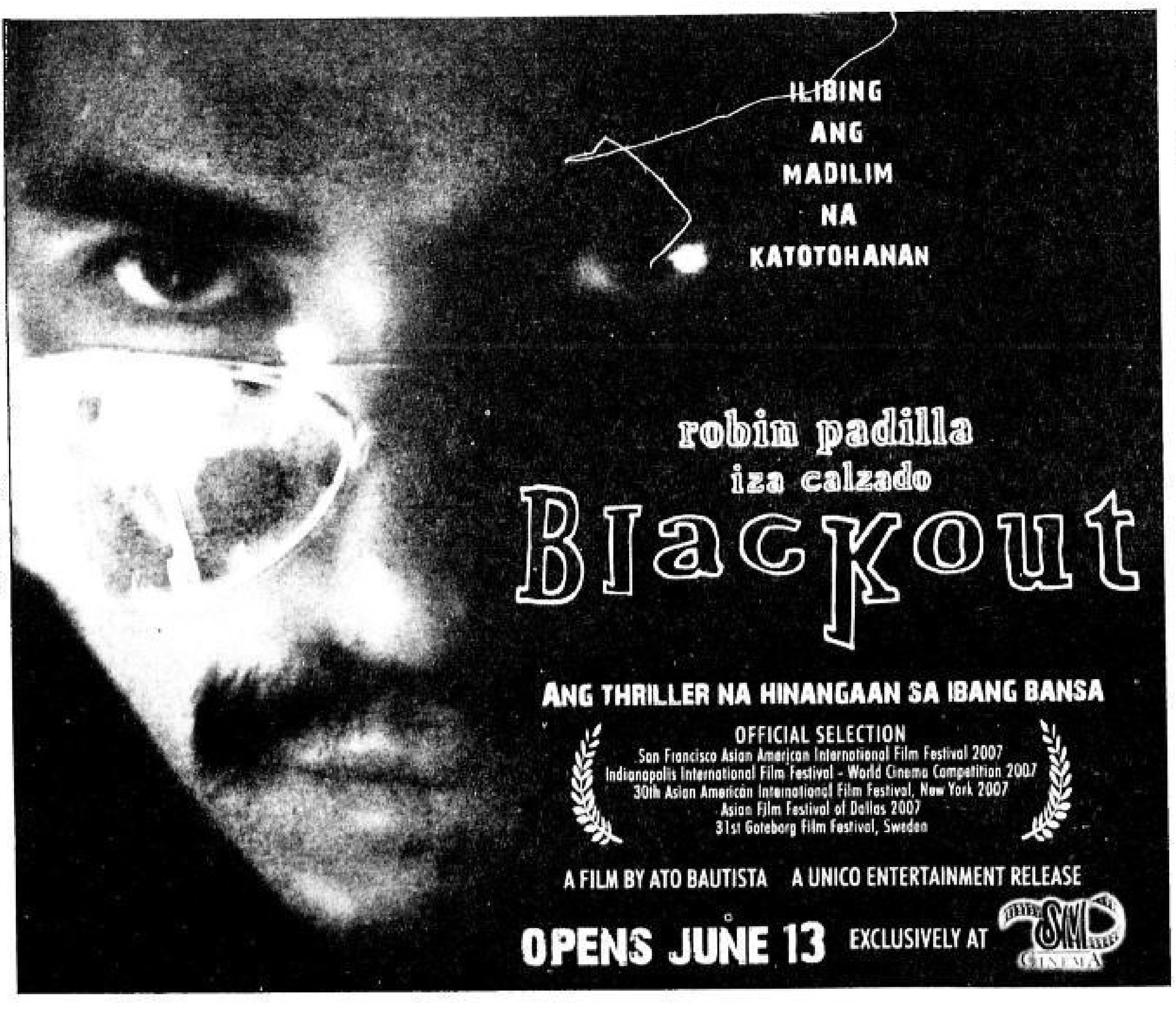
OCEAN'S THIRTEEN
OPENS JUNE 6 AT ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD!



What does it take to steal 500 million dollars in 3.5 minutes?
13
days to go to find out!
OCEAN'S THIRTEEN
Las Vegas
Chicago
Miami



ILIBING ANG MADILIM NA KATOTOHANAN
robin padilla
iza calzado
Blackout
ANG THRILLER NA HINANGAAN SA IBANG BANSA
OFFICIAL SELECTION
San Francisco Asian American International Film Festival 2007
Indianapolis International Film Festival - World Cinema Competition 2007
30th Asian American International Film Festival, New York 2007
Asian Film Festival of Dallas 2007
31st Goteborg Film Festival, Sweden
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EXPERIENCE THE DIFFERENCE

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 10:30 / 11:35 / 12:10 / 12:40 1:50 / 2:55 / 3:30 / 4:00 5:10 / 6:15 / 6:50 / 7:20 / 8:00 8:30 / 9:35 / 10:10 / 10:40	SPIDERMAN 3 1:30 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40	FRACTURE 12:10 / 5:00 / 9:50
	SHREK 3 1:30 / 2:05 / 4:00 / 4:35 / 6:30 / 9:00	WHISPER 1:00 / 3:10 / 5:20 / 7:30 / 9:40
	28 WEEKS LATER 2:35 / 7:25	DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
		PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 11:00 / 2:20 / 5:40 / 9:00

Ali MALL 5

1	SHREK 3 12:30 / 3:00 / 5:30 / 8:00	2	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 12:10 R4 / 2:15 / 5:20 / 8:25	3	PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN 3 11:45 / 2:50 / 5:55 / 9:00
4	MESSAGE FROM HEAVEN 12:20 / 2:20 / 4:20 / 6:20 / 8:20	5	SPIDERMAN 3 12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30		DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

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INVITATIONAL 8-COCK DERBY
MAY 24 & 26, 2007

PBA FIESTA CONFERENCE
MAY 27, Sunday
4:05 pm - Talk N Text vs. Sta Lucia ; 6:20 pm - Ginebra vs. San Miguel